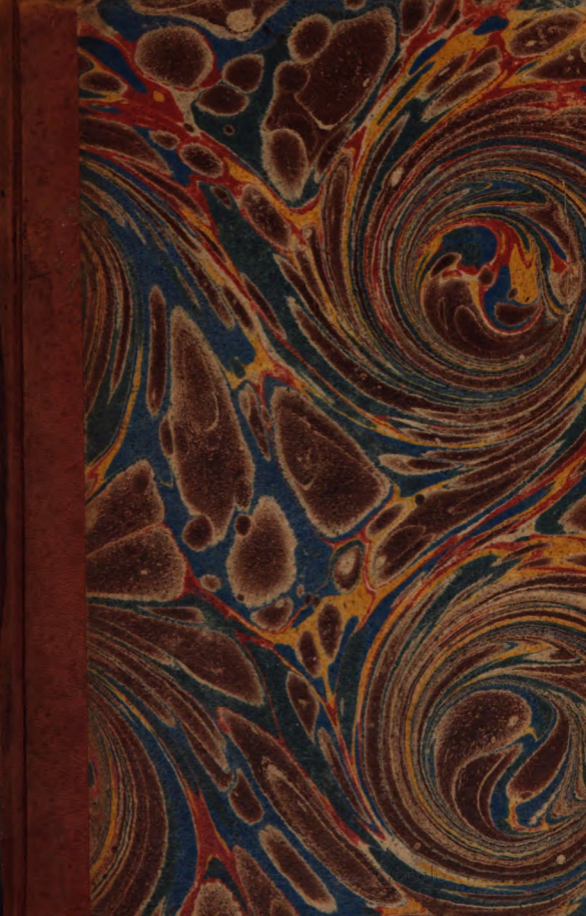
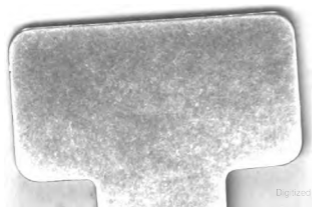

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THE
CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTED.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY LEVEY, ROBSON, AND FRANKLYN,
Great New Street, Fetter Lane.



Blessed is the man whose help is from thee...
Thou hast made known to me the ways of life.

THE
Christian Instructed:

PRECEPTS FOR

LIVING CHRISTIANLY IN THE WORLD.

From the Italian of Quadrupani.



LONDON:
JAMES BURNS, 17 PORTMAN STREET,
PORTMAN SQUARE.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present edition follows the matter and order of the last Italian edition, but is also enriched by the additions from St. Francis de Sales and others, which are found in the Belgian translations. These are distinguished by being printed after each chapter in a closer type.



The Christian Instructed.

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PART II.

Precepts and Practices for a Christian Life.

THE EDITOR TO THE READER.

THE work which I here offer, though small in size, is full of a most excellent and precious juice. Whoever may have read "The Precepts for tranquillising Timorous Souls," will here recognise the same master hand, and the same spirit, that prompted those invaluable precepts. The celebrated Father Charles Joseph Quadrupani, of the order of the Barnabites, whose name, even now, is its own eulogium, was the author of both these works. He wrote them, not with the intention of publication, but for the guidance, and at the request, of several persons, illustrious from their rank, but much more from their piety. The first of these works was printed at Turin, by the order of superiors, and new editions were rapidly printed all over Italy. The universal impression which was made, and he

advantage which was derived from that admirable little book by the most pious and devoted minds, assures me that the present will not be received with less applause, nor be read with less profit. Here will be found secure and sound doctrine, drawn from the same pure fountains; the same clearness and precision, the same admirable discretion in fixing the boundaries between virtue and vice, in prescribing, counselling, and varying forms, according to our different conditions, but always retaining the substance and basis of Christian perfection, which consists wholly in the love of God, and in fulfilling His holy will. The present work has this advantage over its predecessor, that whereas the precepts of the first were principally directed towards a particular class of persons, these will be much more extensively useful, because they concern the general duties of a Christian in all the relations of life.

It may possibly appear to some that our author is even too bland and gracious, and that he does not sufficiently carry out the severity of the Gospel, and the terrible truths which it teaches. The very same accusation was formerly brought against the great St. Francis de Sales, without that distinguished saint departing in the least from that system of sweetness and moderation, which experience, and still more the Spirit of the Lord, had informed him was best for the conduct of souls. The titles alone of these two works will reveal the intention of the author, and dissipate these ill-founded fears. “ I

behold," he would say, with the saint, "a soul that would fain aspire to the love of God. I direct my words to Philothea, because, wishing to make useful to many souls that which was at first written only for one, I make use of a name common to all who would be devout." All Italy indeed, where, for forty years, this author exercised his apostolic mission, admired in him the strength and powers of a perfect orator, and was witness besides of his zeal and his learning, so that in him a perfect sacred orator and minister of the Gospel were united. Far from screening vice or dissolute habits, with how much eloquence and truth did he not depict their deformity; with what a torrent of learning defend the purity of the Gospel, now against the sophisms of infidels, now against the corruption of Christian morals; with what apostolic freedom (*coram gentibus et regibus*) discuss the most delicate points of the duty of the followers of a pure and crucified God, and, according to his opportunity, inculcate the severity of the Gospel, and inspire a just terror of the judgments of God to rouse the torpid soul of the sinner! But the duties of public persons are very different from those of private life. The abundant rains that make green the parched fields, beat down the delicate flowers of the garden; and the medicines proper for a robust constitution, or to one grown old in wickedness, would be fatal to a more delicate temperament, and, applied to those slight failings which are the indivisible companions of nature, would be generally more dangerous than

the failings themselves. It may be proper to observe, that the author having occasionally treated of the same subjects in his "Instructions for tranquillising Timorous Souls," the reader may refer to these when he pleases.

INTRODUCTION.

1. "An action good in itself," says St. Augustin, "becomes still more praiseworthy and virtuous when it is agreeable to rule or order ; if it wants order, it wants virtue."

2. We will therefore suggest a general rule of life, which shall embrace all our various duties towards God, towards our neighbour, and towards ourselves.

3. Let it be remembered that the methods here prescribed, given at the discretion of the writer, are not compulsory ; it is no fault, not even a venial one, to neglect them. Chains are for slaves, and not for the children of God ; these know no other bonds than those of love, and of the Divine benevolence. An affectionate and grateful son does not delight his father by the exhibition of terror at his authority, but by love for his person.

I.

OUR DUTY TOWARDS GOD.

The duty of a Christian towards God is comprised in the exercises of religion ; that is, in making a proper use of prayer, masses, confession, communion, spiritual reading, and the sanctification of feasts. We will briefly enumerate the points necessary to be observed in regard to these duties.

PRAYER.

1. Prayer is the usual means by which God imparts His graces. "The prayer of man," says St. Augustin, "ascends to God, and His mercy descends upon man."

2. But every thing has its limits and bounds ; when the Scriptures prescribe continual prayer, we are not to understand actual prayer, which is not possible to man in this world, but the desire of glorifying God in all our actions, which desire ought to be constant ; whence St. Augustin says, "If thy desire is frequent, frequent also is thy prayer ; if thy desire is continual, continual is thy prayer."

3. The measure and extension of our prayer must be more or less in conformity to the temper of our mind and the duties of our condition.

4. Whoever protracts his prayer in such a manner as to weary and vex the spirit, contravenes the very purpose of prayer, which is to maintain a lively

desire of glorifying God. This doctrine, luminously explained by St. Thomas, ought to be remembered by those worthy persons who, by excessive prayer, oppress the soul instead of recreating it. A temperate and sober man stops eating when his appetite ceases, let the viands be ever so wholesome, savoury, or exquisite.

5. We ought not to neglect the needful employments of our state in order to indulge in prayer at our own discretion. St. Thomas says, that when we are occupied in the discharge of our duty and the Divine will, we receive from God all His sanctifying graces even without frequent prayer. Our employment and fatigue hold the place of prayer. Thus it is more advantageous to weary ourselves for the love of God, than to rest ourselves with thinking of God as we do in prayer.

6. Be not solicitous of multiplying vocal prayers, but of sanctifying them ; this is done by reciting them with composure and thoughtfulness. It is not the quantity of food, but its good digestion, that gives bodily strength. "Indeed," says St. Francis de Sales, "our self-love is a great meddler, that attempts much and perfects nothing." Little and good, is the maxim of the wise and prudent man ; a great deal, upon any terms, is the principle of the stolid and presumptuous man.

1. St. Bernard says, that it is unworthy of the Supreme Majesty to be won, except by those who seek Him with a perfect heart. The perfect heart is

that which is for ever seeking God. St. Augustin likewise assures us, that we cannot deserve to obtain in prayer that which we seek, unless we seek it with all the assiduity and patience which so great a benefit demands.

Let us make application of this rule, and do ourselves, notwithstanding our self-love, an exact justice. We must not be surprised if God frequently leaves us in a state of obscurity, disgust, and temptation. These proofs purify humble souls, they serve unfaithful ones as an expiation of their faults, they confound those who, even in prayer, would flatter their own weakness and pride.

If an innocent soul, detached from creatures and assiduously addressing itself to God, suffers interior afflictions, it ought to humble itself to adore the designs of God in its regard, and redouble its prayers and its fervour. How can persons who have every day to reproach themselves with continual infidelities, dare to complain that God refuses to them His communications? Ought they not to own that it is their sins which, according to the language of the Scripture, have raised a thick cloud between themselves and heaven, and that God is justly hidden from their eyes?

Has not God sought us a hundred times in our wanderings? have not we, ungrateful that we are, a hundred times been deaf to His voice and insensible to His goodness?

He wills, then, to make us feel in our turn how blind and miserable we were in flying Him; after interfering for us beforehand, He leaves us to our own discretion, He compels us to purchase by our patience the same favours which He before lavished upon us, and of which we disregarded the worth. It is only vanity and a fantastical shame that is impatient under the very neglect which we have

ourselves presumed to indulge. How often have we been summoned in vain! It is just that our supplication should for a while be unattended to.—*Fenelon.*

2. Prayer is the principal exercise of faith ; it is the soul and the life, it applies to all the points of our belief, it draws them near us, it places them under our eyes, it makes us taste them, it gives them a substance and a reality ; in fine, it makes all sensible things disappear, and makes known to us those which are eternal, though they are still to come.

You know God but very imperfectly ; you frequently imagine Him other than what He is ; you live with Him as with an unknown and a stranger ; you do not comprehend even His wisdom and His goodness ; you act in His regard with a disguise, a reserve, an embarrassment, and a closing of the heart, quite contrary to the respect and the love which you owe Him ; you set up an idol in the place of the true God ; you serve a grievous master instead of Him who is the Father of mercies ; in fact, you bear a yoke of iron instead of that of Jesus Christ, which is light and sweet. This is not surprising ; it is only the Holy Ghost who, according to St. Paul, can enable us to enter into the secrets and the designs of God. God only can bestow on us the knowledge of Himself, as there is no other light than His own that discovers the brightness of the sun ; and it is in prayer that God communicates Himself to the soul. He speaks in silence, for He will speak alone ; He shews Himself to us as to Moses and Elias, in the solitude and the desert ; He approaches those who invoke Him with ardour and humility ; He is beheld by those who purify their hearts in order to render them worthy of Him ; He enlightens them, He is master of their souls, He teaches them Himself ; it is in vain that

men teach us, if He does not.—*Conduct of a Christian Lady.*

MEDITATION.

1. Meditation is the light of the mind and the consolation of the spirit ; as David said of himself, that the mercy of meditation warmed his heart, and kindled within him the fire of charity.

2. We ought every day to spend half-an-hour in meditation, when we are not hindered by sickness, or some extraordinary occupation.

3. The subject of meditation should generally be selected on the previous evening, or at least before commencing the meditation ; then the mind applies more easily to the matter which it has forecast.

4. The subject of meditation should generally be calculated to awaken us to a confidence in and love of God ; arguments of terror are rarely proper for your mind.

5. Do not attempt much material for meditation, but a few points well arranged. Remember the counsel of the most learned of the spiritual Fathers, that during the time of meditation we ought rather to draw ourselves into the affections of the heart, than into the reflections of the mind, since reflection is only the means, and affection is the end.

6. Take notice, that you must not only commence your meditation with recollection and with peace, but without anxiety, or superfluous fears of distraction. Involuntary distractions bestow on us two merits : the one is penitence, it being a great afflic-

tion not to be able to hold ourselves collected before God, whence St. Teresa said, "When I do not pray, I do penance;" and the other is the merit of the prayer itself, since God rewards the desire equally with the work, when the fulfilment of the work is not in our power.

7. It will be indeed a great consolation to remember the doctrine of St. Francis de Sales, "that the best of prayers is that in which we keep ourselves in peace and calmness in the presence of our Lord, without other desire or pretension than that of being with Him and doing His will." The child that rests upon the bosom of its mother does not speak, save with its loving looks, and its apparent delight while reposing in her maternal arms.

8. In conclusion, meditation ought not to multiply resolutions, but to repeat those which relate to the predominant passion. A multitude of resolutions serve but to embarrass the spirit, not to improve it. He who promises many things, generally performs but few.

9. St. Teresa advises that the person be commodiously placed while at prayer, so that the mind be not distracted by the uneasiness of the body. Do not, then, fatigue yourself with long genuflections; keep your mind prostrate before God, with due reverence, confidence, and love.

1. But how will you pray? St. Paul teaches us in two words: I will pray, he says, with my heart

and with my mind. I will join sentiment and love to thought and intelligence. And it was thus that the Son of God told the Samaritan that the time was come when the true adorers of His Father should adore Him in spirit and in truth. Prayer and adoration are parts of the same principle. We honour God when we pray to Him, according to what He Himself said to the Prophet: You shall cry out to Me, and I will raise you up; when My aid is implored, then am I honoured.

But how can we honour God, save in loving Him? According to St. Augustin, we pray to Him only for love, and like a father He hears us through the voice of charity. "It is love that seeks, it is love that knocks at the gate;" "it is charity herself," he says elsewhere, "who sighs, who prays; and God, who has infused her into our hearts, will not shut His ears to her voice. It is the heart that speaks to God, as the tongue speaks to men." "However loud our cries, however holy our thoughts, however tender the psalms that we recite, if the heart loves not, all is dumb; for God listens only to the heart, and the heart speaks only through charity."—*Conduct of a Christian Lady*.

EJACULATORY PRAYERS.

1. Ejaculatory prayers are those brief aspirations, those glances of love, which have so much effect in raising the soul to God. Of these St. Francis de Sales writes, that they supply the place of all other prayers, and all other prayers will not make amends for a deficiency of these.

2. Ejaculations can be made in every place, time, and occasion. In the same manner as we take comfits and aromatic lozenges to sweeten the breath and comfort the stomach, so does the frequent use of ejaculations soothe the spirit.

3. The ancient monks of whom St. Augustin speaks, were not able to indulge in long prayers, because they were compelled to labour for their daily food. The frequent use of ejaculatory prayers supplied for them the deficiency of other prayers, and they were able thus to pray continually, even in the midst of their labour.

4. I wish much that you would diligently acquire the practice of this important prayer ; it is more important than an abundance of vocal prayers, which very often serve only to weary the tongue, without illuminating or reviving the spirit.

THE MASS.

1. The Mass renews the same sacrifice which Jesus Christ consummated on the cross ; there is no difference, save that the sacrifice of the cross was bloody, and of the altar unbloody.

2. With this stainless sacrifice are fulfilled four duties that bind man to God, according to St. Thomas. Firstly, we thereby honour Him for His greatness and majesty ; secondly, we offer satisfaction for the sins we have committed ; thirdly, we thank the Lord for the benefits which we have received ;

and fourthly, we implore Him in behalf of our daily wants.

3. The Mass is of infinite value, because it collects the infinite merits of Jesus Christ: but its effects are limited according to the greater or less devotion of him who celebrates, who orders it to be celebrated, or assists at the celebration. The sea, says St. Augustin, contains immense waters, and we obtain a greater or lesser quantity of these waters, according to the size of the vessel with which we draw them up. Those immense waters collected in the ocean are a type of the immense merits of Jesus Christ collected in the Mass; the greater or lesser vase is the greater or lesser devotion of those who assist at the sacrifice.

4. We should assist at Mass very devoutly; and though a great number of Masses are valuable, fewer Masses and great devotion at them is more so.

5. In your way to Mass say to yourself, "Be far from me, O thoughts of earth! I go to the holy mount of God, where all ought to be sanctity and love!" Then enter the church in devout silence.

6. Before Mass begins, or at its beginning, make a brief but lively and affectionate act of contrition, by which you will still more purify your heart, to assist and participate in the great Sacrifice to the God of purity.

7. Let every prayer, either vocal or mental, be so fitted, as to turn the Mass to the advantage of him who hears it. It will, therefore, be very useful to meditate on the symbols represented by the actions

of the celebrant, as we see them described in many devotional books. But in preference to a meditation upon these symbols, we must make pious reflections, and still more resign the heart to devout love. They greatly err upon this point who are more solicitous of multiplying the prayers analogous to the actions of the priest which they read in their books, than of making devout reflections and aspirations. Theirs are rather the prayers of a loquacious tongue than of a religious spirit.

8. Towards the end of the Sacrifice, or at the time of its consummation, you should offer yourself, and all that you have, to that Jesus who offered Himself for you to His eternal Father. You may then also make a spiritual communion.

9. On any peculiar occasion, or on the recurrence of our Saint's day, it will be well to have Mass celebrated by some priest of well known piety, who is aware of our necessities, and will pray fervently in our behalf.

10. The alms for Mass must be proportioned to our rank in life and the amount of our substance.

CONFESSION, COMMUNION, AND SPIRITUAL READING.

1. Confession is the most powerful of all means for justifying and consoling those poor sinners who desire to retrieve themselves.

2. I would have you confess at least every fifteen days, and whenever you have committed a fault.

3. St. Francis de Sales says, that a quarter of an hour's examination is enough for those who confess every eight days. It will be well to make it the evening before, so that you may be at liberty in the morning to apply your thoughts to holy Communion.

4. The minute relation of faults is not that which cancels them, no more than exact enumeration of his debts absolves the debtor. On the other hand, your confessor ought to know the state of your mind and your ordinary failings. An excessive examination only serves to weary the mind and trouble the heart.

5. You ought to determine upon flying all sin, but especially your prevailing one.

6. Whoever does not habitually wish to sin is habitually contrite; hence, such a person is very susceptible of actual contrition. You do not generally know or feel when you are contrite, because contrition is not a thing which touches the senses or the appetite; but you have it whenever your will resists your sin, and in this consists true contrition. The displeasure at not hating sin as we ought, springs from the hatred of sin itself, as the desire of loving God springs from the love of God.

7. Make every confession in such a spirit as if you knew it would be your last, and tell what you would then tell. Declare every thing with clearness and confidence; seek not to gloss over your sins, and especially those which regard purity. Address yourself to God, from whom nothing can be concealed;

and guard yourself from playing the theologian, or being silent upon any material point.

8. Do not confess according to your own wish, but in compliance with the dictates of obedience. Your confessions will then be less pleasing to your self-love, but they will be more pleasing to your God. They will seem to give you less satisfaction, but you will enjoy more merit.

9. The best and most secure means, says St. Thomas, of knowing whether we are in the grace of God, and whether our past sins are cancelled, is to consider our present life. If the past displeases you, if you do not fall into your former habits, it is a sign that the poison is gone, that the grace of the Lord is in you. If the root of the heart be still vitiated as at first, it will produce the same fruits as at first. Thus says St. Francis de Sales. These considerations should tranquillise you as concerns the past.

10. Frequent communion is one of the most efficacious means of reaching perfection. "If worldlings," says St. Francis de Sales, "ask you wherefore you communicate so frequently, answer them that it is to learn to love God, to purify yourself from your imperfections, to free yourself from your miseries, to comfort yourself in your afflictions, to sustain yourself in your weakness. Those who have few worldly affairs ought to frequent the Sacrament because they have leisure; those who have many, because then the greater is their necessity: since he who is greatly fatigued and has much to do requires frequent and solid food."

11. The dispositions for communion are some of them more remote from the heart, others closely affecting it. The first consists in purity of heart, a hatred of all kind of sin, and a lively desire of feeding on the celestial food.

12. The other emotion is indicated by St. Francis de Sales when he says, that we should bring to communion a heart ardently loving. We should, indeed, forget all creatures, and regard only the Creator whom we are going to receive.

13. "It is proper, likewise," proceeds the saint, "that we should abandon ourselves totally to the Divine Providence; not only as regards temporal goods, but even spiritual ones; resigning to the presence of the Divine goodness all our affections, desires, inclinations, to be entirely submitted to Him, assuring ourselves that our Lord will, on His part, maintain His own promises which He has made, of transforming our lowness, and uniting it to His grandeur."

14. A single communion may suffice to render us holy; "but the case is certain, whenever we do not receive the grace of sanctification, it is because Jesus finds our hearts full of desires, of affections, of wishes. He would have it void, and make Himself the master of it." Let it be your first duty after communion to abandon yourself to God; seek only His love and His beneficence, simply, nakedly, and generously.

15. On the day before communion make frequent ejaculations of holy and loving desires, of confi-

dence in approaching sanctification ; on the day of communion breathe ejaculations of thankfulness, of adoration, of repose in God. But let all be without violence or superfluous concentration, gentle, calm, and loving.

16. We address God only with fixing the mind upon Him. If, then, you forget your ejaculations, be not therefore disturbed ; hope that God will give you grace to remember them another time, and hold your soul in peace.

17. If you abandon yourself to the Divine influence in the holy communion, you will suffer generously and tranquilly any dryness that may afflict you, without losing time in seeking for its cause. The resigned soul receives all from God ; it exults not in its consolations, it does not mourn over its dryness. (Here refer to what was said upon prayer.)

18. Select for your spiritual reading such books as are most likely to nourish your soul, and make yourself familiar with the works of St. Francis, and with the spirit of the Saint, written by Monseigneur de Belly.

19. In spiritual reading we ought to look upon the things there contained as if they were written by God.

20. Take for a rule, that extraordinary practices are always suspicious, and easily involve a secret vanity. Therefore it is that St. Bernard says, that virtue consists not in uncommon, but in common things.

1. The most essential of all dispositions is purity. You know that the Son of God washed His disciples' feet before they sat at His table. We must be all purified, not only our hands, but our feet; and Jesus Christ Himself will purify us.

The man who came to the wedding feast without a nuptial garment was not only dismissed from the table, but loaded with chains and precipitated into an abyss of fire, where he must suffer eternally, and eternally shed useless tears. Perhaps, though invited to the feast, he had attended it against his inclination; for this is the case with many.—*Conduct of a Christian Lady.*

2. This mystery of love revolts the gross senses and the proud spirit; but the Scripture is not less formal for the presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament than for the Incarnation. All is real in the gifts of God. That flesh which He really took for men in general, He gives with the same reality to each individual in the Eucharist. Whoever loves and feels how much we are beloved (for I do not speak to those who feel nothing),—whoever loves and feels how much we are beloved, has but to hold himself silent, and adore. Let us, then, importune ourselves no more; here simple love supersedes all else. This flesh is meat indeed, and this blood is drink indeed.

How sweet is this belief in the presence of Jesus Christ! how it softens, how it fills us with love, how it retains us, how proper is it to our wants, and how worthy of Him who has so much loved us! Be thou silent, curious and proud philosophy; wisdom convicted of folly, vile elements of a terrestrial science, keep far from me: flesh and blood cannot understand these mysteries. Happy those who believe without seeing! Carnal men, men of little faith, what do you doubt? Is it the goodness or the

power of Jesus Christ, who, to define what He gives us, expressly says, "This is My body?" Do you fear that the Word which became flesh without ceasing to be God, does not still know how to feed us with this flesh without diminishing its own glory, whatever indecency impiety or chance may put upon the corruptible veil which conceals it? Your difficulty shews that you know neither the majesty of Jesus Christ, equally unalterable by itself in all its conditions, nor the excess of His love.—*Fenelon*.

3. The joy of the world cannot ally itself with that which we find in God; and it is on this account that the greater number of those who communicate taste so little sweetness. They seek elsewhere for satisfaction; they still love the esteem of men, sprightly conversations, the lectures of curiosity, inquietude, and dissipation of heart: they still hold to some exterior thing; they are sensible to things which have weight in the world. Their passions are lively and agitated; they take wing, they seek satisfaction apart from God, by what St. Augustin calls a spiritual adultery; for consolation is pure and solid only in God Himself. How can they hope, with a disposition so contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, to enter into the secret joy of their Master? Since that will not suffice them, they must endure these rebuffs, they must bear with these reproaches; the dryness of which they complain is their due chastisement.—*Conduct of a Christian Lady*.

4. By means of this Sacrament, men, if they are well disposed, become incorporated with Jesus Christ, so as to make one with Himself. This nourishment, if properly received, acts as though Jesus Christ Himself lived, spoke, acted, suffered, and exercised all the virtues in us. It makes us grow each day in a divine life, hidden with God and Jesus Christ; it humbles the spirit, it mortifies the

body, it tames the fleshly appetites, it fortifies us against our brutal passions, it inspires us with recollection and prayer, it holds us united to God in an interior life, it detaches us from this life so fragile and so short, it inflames us with a desire of reigning with God in heaven. It gives us an infinite horror of mortal sin, and a filial fear which alarms us even at the sight of the most venial faults; it supports us in the midst of crosses and temptations; it enables us to continue our pilgrimage even to the mountain of God.

To render ourselves worthy of the holy Communion, we should conquer ourselves by degrees, we should practise virtue, and have recourse to God by simple and short prayers, said without weariness. The taste for vice will insensibly disappear, a new inclination of grace seizes on the soul; we shall be famishing for Jesus Christ, who will nourish us for eternity. The longer we eat this sacred bread, the more shall our faith be augmented; we shall then fear nothing so much as excluding ourselves from the holy table by some infidelity. Our devotions, so far from being an occupation which wearies and burdens us, will be, on the contrary, a source of consolation and a sweetening of our cross. Let us put ourselves, then, in a state frequently to approach the Sacrament; without that, we shall always bear a life tepid and languishing for health. We shall be like a reed opposed to the winds, we shall not advance; if, instead, we are nourished by Christ's word and flesh, we shall be like a vessel wafted by a favourable breeze. Happy those who are in this last condition, or at least who desire to be in it!

The Eucharist is the sacrament of love. How much has Jesus Christ loved us, since He condescends to become our daily food! He will be our

daily bread, He will be the aliment most familiar to our souls, as the bread of this world supports our bodies. The bread of the body does not retard death or corruption; but Jesus Christ, the bread of our souls, makes us live for ever. "It is the bread descended from heaven, to give life to the world."

It is to be our own enemies, it is to determine to die, not to hunger after this bread,

The Saviour there waits for you with His hand full of graces; it is the Lamb slain for the sins of the world who will be eaten at this heavenly feast. Come, children of God, satisfy yourselves with this Divine flesh; quench your thirst in that blood which washes away all sin. He does but conceal the rays of His glory not to dazzle your weak eyes, and to accustom you to a greater familiarity. Believe, hope, love, bear the Well-beloved in your bosoms, and let Him reign over you in all things. Each of the other sacraments bestows on us the grace for which it was instituted; but this of the Eucharist gives us Christ Himself, the source of all graces, the author and consummation of our faith.—*Fenelon*.

SANCTIFICATION OF HOLIDAYS.

1. Every day is ordained for the glorification of God, but every day is not especially selected by Him as one on which He demands especial worship; those so chosen are called Festival-days.

2. We should, then, sanctify these days with frequent works of charity, with masses, sacraments, sermons, and devout reading.

3. We ought not to weary the frame and oppress

the spirit with excessive practices of devotion. Excess, even in holy things, is reprehensible. Here, indeed, we must recur to what we said in speaking of prayer.

4. We must likewise remember that a friendly visit, a cheerful walk, a rational amusement, being things referable to God, and indeed ordained by Him, may serve to sanctify the feast. In the same manner, the other actions that the life of man demands—food, rest, slumber—are no way opposed to those duties which Christian sanctity requires on the feast-days.

5. I say this for the instruction of those persons who foolishly afflict themselves for the sanctification of festivals, and who seem rather to follow the Pharisæical superstition of the ancient Sabbath, than the holy liberty of spirit which Jesus Christ has given us in His Gospel. Fly, then, the extremes of superfluous dissipation and too many prayers.

6. If your circumstances intervene to prevent your hearing Christian teaching, read on every festival a portion of the Catechism, that you may not forget the precepts of our holy religion.

7. If it chances either that you must travel on a festival, or that you are occupied in any other way not expected or chosen by yourself, be not disturbed because you cannot fulfil your accustomed exercises of piety. Endeavour to make amends with ejaculations; of which we have already said, that they will supply the place of every other prayer.

8. Lastly, take notice that a feast may be kept

with only a single Mass by those persons who are obliged to take care of the house, to nurse children, or attend the sick; because all these are occupations called for by justice and charity. In these cases, the occupation, which is holy, is equivalent to a multitude of prayers.

I do not speak of the sick, for whom the merit of patience will sanctify every day.

II.

OUR DUTY TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOUR.

The general relations that bind us to our neighbour, are those of justice and of charity; and, consequently, they demand the tribute of the heart, of the mind, of the tongue, of the substance, of society. Of the heart, in the purity of the affections; of the mind, in the flight of rash judgments and suspicions; of the tongue, in refraining from slander and injurious words; of the substance, in discreet and proper alms; of society, in rendering it virtuous and happy.

We shall treat separately and briefly of these things.

HOW WE OUGHT TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOUR.

1. We ought to love our neighbour, because he is created by God, and ordained for the possession

of God ; whence the love of God and our neighbour are like two branches which part from the same trunk, and have the same root, as is expressed by St. Gregory the Great.

2. Far from our hearts be the two sordid passions of interest and sensuality, which are as much opposed to the true love of our neighbour as virtue is to sin, and the elected Sion to the reprov'd Babylon.

3. Fly, then, that sensible love which attaches us to our neighbour for the charms of his face, for the vivacity of his wit and his talent, by that, in fact, which interests the senses, the fancy, or the appetite.

4. This sensible love guides us quickly to sensual love ; and the learned Abulensius notes that the attempt to preserve bounds in sensible love, is the same thing as to pretend to preserve our reason in the midst of madness.

5. Such love presents itself at first under an aspect of genial innocence, perhaps even of virtue ; but it is quickly transmuted into a horrid poison. Thus, the serpent has brilliant scales, an elegant and fascinating speech, yet under this beautiful appearance the deadly poison lurks ; even the lightning dazzles our eyes at the same moment that it destroys us. Avoid, therefore, the confidence of elegant persons who are of the opposite sex ; and do not suffer yourself to be drawn towards them by a facility of inclination and condescension.

6. Under the denomination of our neighbours, are

included all those who have already entered, or may at any time be called, to the possession of the celestial beatitude; and from this same love, from its very beginning, are, of course, excluded the devils and the damned.

7. Infidels and sinners must be included in the love which we bear our neighbour, because they may reform and be saved. On the other hand, St. Augustin says, that in the infidel and the sinner we ought to consider two things,—nature, which is the gift of God, and which we ought to love; and sin, which is committed by man, and which we ought to hate. Whence David says, that he hates with a perfect hatred. Do you also hate with this hatred; hate not the sinner, but the sin.

8. We ought, then, to love our neighbour in God; and this love should be constant, universal, and efficacious.

9. A constant love, because He is constant for whose sake we love. If your neighbour have offended you, he does not therefore cease to be the work of God; and this is still a reason why you ought to love him. If you hate the tares that spring from the uncultivated earth, do not hate the earth itself, which, when well cultivated, will bring forth good fruit.

10. It is not in our power not to feel repugnance towards those who offend us; but it is one thing to feel, and another to consent to it. When we are commanded to love our enemies, it is understood

to be by an exertion of the mind and the liveliness of faith, not from our inclination.

11. This love ought to be universal, like the beneficent dew that falls upon the rose and on the thorn, on the palaces of the great and on the humble cabin of the shepherd. If from the faith we exclude a single article, it ceases to be the faith ; so it is with fraternal charity, when we exclude from it a single person.

12. But this love, though universal, receives a great increase of intention from the effects of nature, of gratitude, and of other honest motives. Hence, says St. Thomas, the affinity of blood, the uniformity of country, of education, of inclination, render more intense towards some this love, which began from God, and terminates in God ; hence we more intensely prize and love our relations, our benefactors, the wise, the virtuous, the persons, in fact, who most nearly approach to ourselves or to God.

13. The love of our neighbour ought to be efficacious ; that is, it ought to help him conformably to his wants and our own power. " The fire," says St. Gregory the Great, " is no longer the fire when it does not warm ;" so also, the love which does not confer benefits when it has them to bestow is no longer love.

14. We ought not to deny even to our enemies the common acts of Christian charity, but be ready to lend them some assistance when they require it.

15. Though an internal hatred and extreme bit-

terness towards our enemies and bad persons is forbidden, we are not forbidden to avoid them ; this is but common prudence. There are some persons with whom we cannot be at peace, unless we are at a distance from them. In this case, the keeping apart is a mark of wisdom, not a proof of malice. Who is there that would not fly from a man afflicted with a pestilential and infectious disease ? and this is done not out of hatred to the sick, but fear of his infirmity. Christian charity teaches us to love and assist all our dear brothers ; but it does not call upon us to patronise the wicked, and to expose the innocent and simple to their deceptions and their malice. “ Be you wise as serpents, and harmless as doves,” says Jesus Christ.

16. We must, however, take care that some secret passion does not assume the aspect of this reasonable prudence, while it in truth springs from a hidden rancour.

1. “ Purifying your souls in the obedience of charity, with a brotherly love, from a sincere heart love one another earnestly.” (1 Pet. i. 22.)

The Apostle means by these words, that our charity should be always on guard not to wound our neighbour. Without this care, charity, which is in this life so fragile, will very soon disappear altogether. A word spoken with haughtiness and anger, a reserved and disdainful air, will offend a delicate mind. We ought to be cautious with creatures so dear to God, with the precious members of Jesus Christ. If you fail in this attention, you fail also

in charity; for we cannot love without a due consideration for those whom we love. This carefulness of charity ought to fill both the mind and the heart. It seems to me that I hear Jesus Christ say to you, as He did to St. Peter, "Feed my sheep!"—*Fenelon.*

2. "Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (St. Luke xiv. 11.)

Since we are so fond of elevation, we should at least seek that which will endure. How admirable is the ambition of reigning eternally with the Son of God, and of being seated for ever with Him on His throne; but what a poor ambition, what a childish desire, is that of obtaining a name among men, of arriving at a reputation less solid than the smoke that drives before the wind! Wherefore should we take so much pains to have so many people call themselves our friends, when, in truth, they care not for us? why labour thus for the support of vain appearances? Let us aspire to real grandeur; we shall not find it by lowering ourselves to earth. God confounds the proud in this life, He draws upon them envy, criticism, and calumny, and in the end eternally humbles them; but the humble, who conceal themselves, who seek only to be forgotten, who fear to be sought out by the world, will be, even in this life, respected without wishing it, and an eternal glory will be the recompense for their contempt of an unreal and contemptible glory.—*Fenelon.*

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfil the law of Christ." (Gal. vi. 2.)

Charity does not require that we should not see the defects of others; we are not called upon to refuse the evidence of our senses; but it does demand that we should not be voluntarily attentive

to them, that we should not shut our eyes to the good qualities of others, and keep them open to their defects. We ought to remember what God can do, at any moment that He pleases, for the vilest and most unworthy of His creatures; to recall the many causes we have for despising ourselves; and, finally, to consider that charity embraces even the lowest objects, because it knows that, in the sight of God, our contempt for each other has a hardness and haughtiness which must destroy in us the spirit of Jesus Christ. Grace is not blind to that which is unworthy, but it endures it in order to enter into the secret designs of God. It does not abandon itself either to disdainful disgusts or natural impatience; no corruption surprises it, no impotence repulses it, because it depends only on God, and sees that, except in Him, all is nothingness and sin.

AVOIDING RASH JUDGMENTS AND SUSPICIONS.

1. Whoever in his own mind condemns the neighbour whose guilt is not manifest, injures his brother and offends God.

2. Alexander, called the Great, on any person being accused before him, used to shut one ear, saying, "I give one ear to him who accuses, I reserve the other to listen to the defence of him who is accused." God himself, to whom all things are known, would not condemn Adam before hearing and convicting him.

3. "A single action may have a hundred aspects," says St. Francis de Sales; the upright man looks

to the fair side, he who is himself vicious to the foul one.

4. Beware of judging with passion, which frequently masks the truth. He who looks through a coloured glass sees all things the colour of the glass; if it be red, every object appears red, or yellow, if the glass be yellow. Our passion is the coloured glass that deceives us. If the person satisfies us, all is praise or excuse; but if he be one with whom we are displeased, all is condemnation or sinister interpretation.

5. Do not determine from appearances. The priest Eli believed that Anna, that most holy woman, was intoxicated with wine, while her apparent inebriety was the effect of prayer and the love of God. The beautiful and admired Judith, while she dwelt in the military tents and was the favourite of Holofernes, must have seemed a dissolute woman, while she was, in truth, a model of chastity.

6. It is true that false judgments are not always rash; because they are supported by just reasons. But the best way is not to observe or comment upon what does not concern us, and leave all judgment to God.

7. It is a very difficult thing for a good Christian to become guilty of rash judgment; because he will not with too much certainty condemn his neighbour without very strong reasons; while those whose character is to be suspicious and fearful are satisfied with very trifling ones.

8. Suspicion is lawful when it is exercised with

a proper caution; he who neglects caution lest it should be termed suspicion, is not a pious, but imprudent and imbecile person. Christian charity forbids the malice of thought, but not its vigilance and foresight.

9. It is not only lawful, but a duty, to be occasionally suspicious, especially towards those who are entrusted with the government of others, as in the case of the father over his children, or the master over his servants, as this suspicion may either cure an evil that exists, or prevent one which may be reasonably feared.

10. To suspect the existence of a possible evil, and to suspect the existence of a real evil, in a person, are two very different things. In the first case there is no sin whatever. You may encounter in a wood a person armed with a gun, who may really be a hunter; but suspecting that he may instead be a robber, you put yourself on your guard. There is no sin in this; because, though you apprehend a possible evil, you do not determine upon it.

11. We must not confound fear with suspicion; fear is a passive feeling, for which we are not accountable, but suspicion is a voluntary action of the mind.

12. Suspicion is very often the result of an apprehensive, timid, and melancholy temperament; it is not sinful, save when the intellect interferes and guides the will to the approval of a suspicion which has no sufficient foundation. We must remember always the great theological principle so

often recorded by St. Augustin, "that evil which is neither known nor voluntarily practised, is neither an evil nor a sin."

AVOIDING SLANDER AND INJURIOUS WORDS.

1. There are many schools in the world where we may learn to speak well, but there is none which teaches us to be silent, save the school of Jesus Christ. If in this school you learn how to be silent, you will likewise learn how to speak with propriety; that is, in consonance with charity towards your neighbour, and hence to fly slander.

2. Slander consists, first, in falsely imputing evil to our neighbour; secondly, in aggravating a true evil; thirdly, in making manifest, without any legitimate motive or utility, that evil which was before concealed; fourthly, in putting a bad interpretation upon good conduct; and, fifthly, in denying, or concealing, or diminishing the praise due to others.

3. Accustom yourself to forbear speaking about things that do not concern you. We have too much to do in our own house, and about our own concerns, and need not exercise our tongues upon the embarrassments of others. This thought alone may serve as a sovereign medicine for calumny.

4. When Peter, out of curiosity, demanded of Christ, what should be done by John, Christ gave him that famous reply, "What is that to thee? follow thou Me." Why seekest thou after things that

do not concern thee? think thou of following Me, and no more. Thus ought you to say to yourself, when curiosity urges you to know or examine the actions of others.

5. On the other hand, do not include yourself among those weak people who, from an excessive fear of committing slander, think it behoves them to apologise for every crime and for every delinquent. When the sin or the culprit is notorious, or that, even being concealed, they endanger the innocence or simplicity of others, it becomes a duty to unveil them. "Hence," says St. Francis de Sales, "the shout at the wolf is charity to the lamb." Whoever sees a robber secretly robbing his neighbour, is bound to cry, "Stop thief!" and to warn the despoiled person, so that he may defend himself. How much more ought we to warn those whom the wicked seek furtively to rob of their innocence, by means of their own vicious habits and precepts.

6. The sin is equal between him who calumniates with malice and him who hears the calumny with pleasure. "There is no difference between them," says St. Bernard, "save this, that he who slanders with malice has the devil on his tongue, and he who listens with pleasure has the devil in his ears."

7. I have said, to hear calumnies with pleasure; because if they were heard without approval, you do not consent to them, and are therefore not guilty.

8. If the evil that is imputed to your neighbour be false, you should deny it; if a concealed mis-

chief is aggravated or made known, seek dexterously to turn the conversation upon some other subject, or employ a gravity of countenance, or an eloquent silence, according to the circumstances of the time, the persons, and the place.

9. Take notice, that there may be a great deal of evil very certain and very publicly known without being known to you. In this case there is no sin in those who speak, nor any obligation of correction in those who listen. Besides, unless there be evidence to the contrary, you ought not to indulge such sinister thoughts of your neighbour, as to suppose that he either says what is false, or declares what is concealed.

10. Neither are you obliged to correct the slanderer when there is no hope that he will profit by your correction. Correction is a medicine which is not used when there is no hope that the sick will be cured.

11. Sarcastic, injurious, and contemptuous words, are as a mortal poison to charity; whence the Holy Ghost: Beware that thy tongue do not render thee guilty, lest thy wound be incurable.

12. He who brings injury upon our fame and honour is more hurtful than the thief who steals our money or our goods; nor can he be absolved, except after he has made all possible restitution.

13. Keep a watch, then, over the tongue, which is called by St. James a world of "iniquity;" and remember the fine thought of St. Basil, "that God has not placed any defence over the ear, which

is always open ; that he has given to the eye only the delicate shield of the eyelid ; but that he has imprisoned the tongue between the two strong barriers of the lips and the teeth, that hence we may know how jealously it should be guarded."

14. Take notice also, that virtue does not consist in not speaking, otherwise the dumb would be the most virtuous : it consists in speaking fitly, in the place and time, and with the persons to whom it is proper we should speak.

15. Conversations on indifferent subjects serve to enliven virtuous society, and are consequently not displeasing to God. The idle words which the Gospel denounces do not belong to this class.

ALMS.

1. Wherefore has God, who is the common and loving Father of all men, decreed that some should be born in poverty and others in riches? "Because," replies St. Augustin, "a certain order of things is established, which the inequality of riches and poverty can alone preserve." Thus, were there no indigence in the world, there would be no labour, nor industry, nor art, nor obedience, nor command ; thus riches and poverty are like two loving arms that bind together the human race.

2. But our heavenly Father has not, therefore, forgotten His poor children, who are His dearest treasures, since He willed even that His own be-

loved Son should be born poor, live poor, and die poor.

3. As He remedies the dryness of the earth with dews and rain, which He showers down from heaven, so does He will that the superfluity of the rich should ameliorate the indigence of the poor. He who gives his superfluity to the poor does not bestow a gift; he only fulfils a duty which is imposed upon him by that God who is the provident Father and absolute Master of both rich and poor.

4. He who has the superfluities of life ought to give to his neighbours in their extreme want; and he who enjoys the still greater superfluities of condition ought to give for their common wants, and much more for their serious ones.

5. Every body has a right to the decencies of his peculiar rank. "Now this rank," says St. Thomas, "does not depend upon an indivisible whole; for we may enjoy many things, yet not exceed our condition, and retrench as many without reducing it.

6. An uniform and constant rule, by which we may determine for each condition what is and is not superfluity, cannot, then, be given, for it depends upon too many extraneous circumstances; whence St. Thomas affirms, that we ought, upon this point, to refer ourselves to the judgment of some wise and prudent person.

7. It is certain that all things are superfluous which are neither necessary to the support of life nor the convenience of our state, which state must

always be considered with that Christian moderation, from which no one is lawfully exempt.

8. There are many among the rich who find that they have no superfluities, because they indulge in a vain luxury, which devours all their substance. Those who choose to lead the life of Dives, can find neither bread nor crumbs for Lazarus.

9. Rich persons of this class render useless the great precept of alms-deeds; they are guilty of that fatal rapine, by which they sacrifice, in their blind and sordid ambition, the patrimony assigned by God for the support of the poor. They are, therefore, called by Tertullian, "the rich pre-ordained to hell, in opposition to the rich alms-givers pre-ordained to glory." The poor man's road to heaven is in suffering, that of the rich in alms-deeds.

10. It is not setting aside for superfluities, but an observance of the laws of prudence to reserve some reasonable sum of money for the ordinary or extraordinary occurrences which continually happen in the course of life. All meat should have its salt, and every virtue its prudence and foresight.

11. Much more than is here said may be applied to parents and relations who reserve certain sums for the proper education of their progeny, or to dower young girls according to their state and substance. This is not reserving a superfluity, but providing for a necessity, since education and dotation are duties of justice, both in parents and those who supply their place.

12. But to be provident for one's children, it does

not need that we should be cruel towards the poor. The fairest inheritance which we can leave to our children is the exercise of charity. The family of a charitable man will always be blessed by that God who commands charity.

13. Do not renounce the essentials of your condition to lavish alms. Virtue, as we have before observed, with St. Augustin, consists in order, and that which contravenes order is not virtue. And such are alms-deeds that rob us of the essentials of our rank.

14. There are many who, for the sake of giving abundant alms, forget to be grateful and generous to those who have benefited and assisted themselves. This is an error; the virtues respect themselves, they walk hand in hand, nor does one exact the tribute which is due to another.

15. Do not fancy that you can assist all the indigent; this is not possible. When you have given a certain amount of alms, such as some prudent person judges to be in accordance with your circumstances, you have fulfilled your duty towards God and your neighbour, and may be content.

16. It is proper to be very careful in the distribution of alms, for, unfortunately, there are too many who either feign poverty, or exaggerate it, in order to procure assistance. It is, then, needful to be very slow in hearing, and cautious in giving, that charity should fall into the hands of true, and not, as so often happens, of simulated distress. If all alms were discreetly distributed, there would not be

so many truly poor. There are many who, in order to avoid deception on so serious a point, will have their alms distributed, wholly or in part, in parishes where they know the probity of the recipients ; or by their directors, who, in the exercise of their ministry, become closely acquainted with the miseries of the poor.

17. Remember this great counsel of the Saints : You who have much, give much ; you who have but a little, give a little ; and you who have nothing, yet nourish the desire to give ; because, in the sight of God, the amount of the offering is worth less than the affections with which it is offered. The widow's mite is more pleasing to God than the pompous oblations of the proudest lords.

18. Love spiritual alms. A wise counsel, a virtuous instigation, a salutary comfort, a visit to the sick, the patronage bestowed on the widow or the orphan, on the person abandoned and oppressed, are the alms most meritorious in the sight of God, as they generally shine the least in the eyes of men.

COMMON SOCIETY.

1. Man, when he is born into the world, cannot provide for himself and his own essential wants. He depends upon others for the support of his life and his education, which clearly proves that he is designed by nature for a social being.

2. Society has divers relations, which call for the exercise of divers duties. There is common society, family society, and particular society. The first is called common, because it extends to all men with whom we have any intercourse. The second is called family society, because it is restricted to the domestic circle. The third, of particular society, applies to those friendships which we contract only with a few.

3. In common society we should exhibit respect towards our superiors, sweetness with our equals, and benignity towards our inferiors.

4. In conversation, as it is an ordinary and honest recreation, each person should contribute his share of innocent gaiety, otherwise such assembling would sadden instead of relieving the mind.

5. Avoid, therefore, a tedious loquacity, a sullen silence, and a severe aspect. Loquacity conveys the idea of a person either presumptuous, silly, or inconsiderate. A severe aspect, or remarkable silence, implies that you are not pleased with your company.

6. Scurrility in speech is the poison of conversation; it is alike opposed to the morals of the Christian, to the decorum of the citizen, to the probity of the man, and to that civility which is the first element of a good education. There are many who boast of being persons of wit and mind, who can speak only according to the grossness of the flesh, who value themselves as philosophers, while their philosophy terminates in the code of the senses.

7. Physicians, in order to learn the state of a sick person, look at the tongue; the same rule may

hold to make known the character of the persons with whom we converse. He who has a foul and immodest tongue cannot have a clean heart. The tongue of such a person is compared by St. James to a flame from the fire of hell; and by David, to a fetid sepulchre, which poisons and corrupts the pure air. Avoid, then, such unbecoming discourses more than you would avoid one afflicted with the plague; because the pestilence of the mind is still more fatal than that of the body.

8. We must endeavour in conversation to please, not to offend. Avoid, then, the odious character of a dictator, a critic, a boaster, a buffoon, or an inconstant. A dictator is one who explains with an imposing air, and assumes that all must be silent at his voice. The critic is one who undertakes to censure every thing and every body, past or present, and who will engage in a dispute upon every topic of discourse. The buffoon is one who will make the company laugh at the expense of others, either by loading them with ridicule, or by abusing their simplicity. The boaster speaks incessantly of his own prowess, his own talents, his ancestors, his illustrious family. The inconstant is of a more variable humour than the winds or the waves; by turns he assumes a gentle and gracious air, or appears sullen and discontented, and more fretful than the porcupine. Men of this temper, of whom there are a great many, render conversation uncivil and burdensome.

9. To do by others as we should wish them to do

by us, and not to do that which we should not wish done towards ourselves, is the main bond of all society, and the crowning grace of conversation.

1. How are we to reconcile in our conversation the duties of religion and the ideas of the world? There are some people for whom nothing is more easy, and who know perfectly well how to make that agreement between God and the world which Jesus Christ pronounced impossible. When these persons find themselves in pious society, you would take them for saints, so profoundly do they seem penetrated with religious sentiments, and such fine things do they say; but when they are in company where religion is attacked, their bearing is equally complaisant, and they seem to approve of all they hear. They call this a conciliating spirit; but I ask, what is it but a base human respect? We ought not to disguise our sentiments, especially in an age in which evil has made such great strides; but it is at the same time needful, in some things, to accommodate ourselves to the times in which we live. If you find yourself in company where religion is ill spoken of, will you assume an air of approval, will you not dare to take the part of your God? Will you strike for Him? Will you smile at blasphemies? Make your opinions openly manifest; but take care, for here, above all things, prudence is necessary, not to pick up the glove which has perhaps not been thrown down. If they are but a few words spoken heedlessly, such as we so often hear in the world, you cannot make a cause out of them; and you embark in a discussion where you will be speedily vanquished. Consider beforehand, if you are well enough grounded in the sub-

ject not to fear a defeat. Then think of those who may be present ; perhaps they are children, who will understand well what is said against their religion, but who may not equally well comprehend your explication. On these accounts, if the question be of importance, and your silence might compromise your religion, do not keep silence, take up the word ; but if it appears only a slight and insignificant attack, it were prudent to let it fall.

DOMESTIC SOCIETY.

1. Domestic society is of more importance than common society, because it touches us more nearly. It is a grievous thing to have in common the same table, the same house, the same interests, yet not enjoy a like community of affection ; yet there are many who are gracious and obliging in the company of strangers, who are harsh and insupportable in the bosom of their own family.

2. Drive far from you this horrible defect. The richest family must be unhappy if it lacks reciprocal peace. Without this there can be no regular economy, nor content of mind ; neither the esteem of man nor the benediction of God.

3. We ought, then, to use every endeavour to preserve this peace where it exists, to introduce it where it does not. Love, forbearance, vigilance, order, these are most powerful and secure means for attaining so great an end.

4. Love, says St. Augustin ; and then do in your

family what you will ; love will instigate you, and you will be always amiable ; you, loving the others, will be loved by them in return, and with this reciprocal love there will be a consonance of affection and of labour.

5. But in every family, however worthy, there must be some defects, because it is a company of men, not of angels. Thence it is necessary for the members to bear with each other, otherwise every straw will become a beam, and every breath of wind a ruinous tempest. The others endure your defects, and you must tolerate theirs. It is an old proverb, that he who would live at peace must see, hear, and say nothing.

6. Guard yourself from all cavilling and vexatious pretensions ; these things are unbecoming among strangers, and much more so in your family. I do not tell you to abandon your just rights ; I only say, beware of equipping yourself with arbitrary pretensions with the sacrifice of peace, which is so great a good that it is beyond all price.

7. Keep at a distance those persons who report the conversations and actions of the members of your family, as they can only excite your anger or occasion a quarrel. Whoever undertakes to report the failings of others, without an obligation of conscience to do so, is just as likely to invent them altogether. If, indeed, you examine with diligence all the things which are reported to you, you will find that they are either wholly false, or that, when their fashion is varied, they will bear a very different aspect.

8. It does not seldom happen that certain persons among the servants have a secret rivalry with the domestics who serve other masters in the family, and try to make you believe the things suspected or exaggerated by their own blind and vile passions. In such cases you should be slow to believe, and still slower to condemn. Public delinquents even are never condemned without a previous process.

9. The third means of securing domestic peace is in the vigilance of masters over their servants, of fathers over their children, and of husbands over their wives.

10. Keep a careful eye, O masters, upon the Christian conduct of your servants; and if you find them vicious in their habits, quarrelsome, or restless in their character, discharge them immediately, otherwise you will have in your family a thousand evils. How many times, by the machinations of a single bad servant, do there not take place in good and respectable families such scenes as serve for a fatal tragedy for those in the house, while they make, at the same time, a most agreeable comedy for the malicious world out of it. Content yourself, then, even with inferior abilities in your servants, provided they are endowed with piety and prudence. A bad servant draws the scourge of God even upon the house of a good master.

† 11. Be kind to good and clever servants, and mindful of their wants, but do not give them your confidence; such a gift would, in process of time, render them presumptuous, insolent to their com-

panions, and less obedient to commands ; thus too much confidence is hurtful both to the masters and the servants. Persons of a rude education easily abuse the condescension and cordiality of their superiors.

12. Parents should watch carefully over their children, that they be well instructed in their religion ; let them correct their failings, and guide them in virtue by their own virtuous example. Ill-educated children are the torment of their parents, and the source of all domestic bitterness.

13. We must not be too severe with children, so as to oppress their spirits, or irritate them needlessly ; neither must we be too indulgent or remiss, or we shall render them audacious and independent. Eli was reproved by God, because he was too weak in correcting the transgressions of his sons.

14. Seize with great vigilance the first faults of young children ; these are generally neglected by the parents, who call them the effect of natural tendencies and immature reason. But Tertullian wisely remarks, that these are the germs of sin which make prophecies for the future. The thorn at first is too blunt to wound, the snake has not at first all its poison ; but in process of time the thorn strengthens till it pierces like a sword, and the snake becomes venomous as it grows old. When parents are excessively condescending with their children, they are the most dangerous enemies both to these children and to themselves ; and, as Solomon says, " they will convert their offspring into ferocious

lions, which shall devour themselves from whom they derived existence." Generously suffer, then, the sight of your children's tears when it is necessary on your part to correct their reprehensible tendencies, lest they afterwards oblige you to weep for the remainder of your life.

15. As in the little seed is virtually contained the plant, the flower, and the fruit, so in little children are included the germs of every virtue, and of every vice. All the value of education consists in cultivating the first, and rooting out the second.

16. Maintain constantly and prudently that paternal and venerable authority, which the order of nature, and the command of God, gives you over your children; and keep under your notice the companions with whom they associate, the houses that they frequent, the books that they read, and the occupations that they embrace, in order that you may forbid whatever is reprehensible, and suggest whatever is expedient and virtuous.

17. Be careful of your patrimony, because, as St. Paul says, fathers ought to treasure up, that is, economise, for their children; through the neglect of this precept we see many compelled to descend from their original condition, not through the malice of barbarous enemies, but through the carelessness and intemperate luxury of their predecessors.

18. Do not, however, spare expense where it is necessary to give your children a good education, as that is the richest inheritance you can give them; but when we say a good education, we mean that

which makes youth religious towards God, benevolent towards their neighbours, contented in themselves, studious, wise, learned, modest, generous,—such, in short, as an honest Christian and virtuous citizen ought to be.

19. I say this, because there are some who by a good education understand fencing, dancing, and fashion; that new system of philosophy, which serves rather to seduce than to enlighten; those journeys into foreign parts, which serve only to shew them into theatres, to teach them luxury, to make them acquainted with courtiers and unbelievers, and to add, in fact, the vices of other countries to those of their own, which is generally the case with the travelled youths.

20. Nevertheless, you may endow your children with the ornaments of the liberal arts, if they are proper to your state; but surround them first with the ornaments of the mind, with the knowledge and practice of the duties of the man, the citizen, and the Christian; otherwise your sons will be noble by the merit of their ancestors, and ignoble by the vileness of their actions. On the other hand, do not encourage talent when it is not allied to probity; the greatest injuries that are known in families, countries, or conditions, are occasioned by men of superior genius and wicked hearts.

21. The husband is the head of the family, and consequently of the wife, but all authority has its bounds; if the wife has duties towards the husband, the husband also has duties towards the wife. All

those comforts and conveniences proper to their rank in life, a good husband will endeavour to procure for his wife.

22. A rude and threatening manner should be avoided. "Eve, who was the first wife, was not taken," says St. Thomas, "from the head of Adam, because the woman ought not to command the man; neither was she taken from his foot, to shew that she is not to be trampled on; she was taken from the side of Adam, from the neighbourhood of his heart, to symbolise that cordial and loving relationship which ought to subsist between a husband and wife."

23. If the husband be virtuously condescending and gentle towards the wife, and the wife obedient and gracious towards the husband, the sweetest peace will reign in the family.

24. In conclusion, the head of the family ought to fix certain hours for meals, for business, for conversation, the amount of money to be spent, and every thing else regarding the family's affairs; for without method there is no order, and without order, no family can long preserve that domestic peace which all so ardently desire, but which so few employ the proper means of obtaining.

1. There are few persons who can be persuaded that the design of God, in reducing the poor to serve the rich, and permitting these last to employ their fellow-men as their attendants, has been or-

dained to facilitate the safety of weak and ignorant persons, by the assistance and knowledge of those who are wiser and better informed. There is, however, nothing more certain than this. God has given you servants and domestics, in order that they may find in your charity a succour and an asylum ; an example in your piety, instruction from your knowledge ; and in your zeal and application a powerful incentive to what is right. You have no right to exact their temporal services, unless you render them those spiritual ones which are so much more important ; God has given them to you as a deposit, He lends them to you, and will one day exact from you an account of them. If you have neglected their safety, their blood will be on your head ; and as you hold to them the place of all things, you will be examined as to the help which you have given, and they have received. — *Guide of a Christian Lady.*

2. But I will recur to the affection and interest with which you ought to regard the education of your sons and of your daughters. Instead of thinking of means to release yourself from their care, you ought to esteem yourself very happy that God has attached your own duty to a thing in which you have yourself so great an interest ; that He has bounded, so to say, the charity which you ought to exercise towards your neighbour within the circle of your own family ; that He has commanded you, as a capital duty, to love the creatures whom you cannot fail to love ; that He desires that you should remember Him in the persons of your children, and that you should do for His sake that which your natural tenderness for them would induce you to do ; that He attaches a merit and an eternal recompense to cares which last so short a time, which are indispensable, and which, even in this life, are

repaid a hundredfold; that He condescends to associate you with Himself, by making you their spiritual mother, after having employed you to give them life; above all, though it is in His power to use means more proper for His designs, and more worthy of Himself, He has yet chosen to make the safety of your children, and the security of their eternal welfare, depend upon your diligence and wisdom.

When you shall have obtained the consolation of helping those predestined to eternal salvation, will you not be blessed? You ought to regard your children in this light, and say, as Jesus Christ said, in speaking to His Father of His Disciples: "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to Me. Keep in Thy name those whom Thou hast given Me!"

But if this consideration, powerful as it is, does not move you, fear at least for your own interest; for in no other mode can you secure it. All avenues, except this, are closed to you. You will lose the fruit of whatever other good you do, if you do not this. God examines your heart and your sentiments as concerns your children; He treats you according as you treat them; He measures His goodness by your fidelity, and His tenderness by yours. Nothing is here so necessary as faith."—*Christian Lady's Guide*.

2. Who is there not aware, by his own experience, that man's natural tendency is to idleness? It is not, then, enough to make what you may consider a judicious choice; you must still keep on the watch, and inform yourself of what passes between the pupil and the instructor or instructress; and for this the best way is to question the child. Here, however, you will have a very delicate task, or you will fall into the great fault of making the child a little spy, which will have the worst effect upon its

morals. You should chat with your children, put them at their ease, and they will then speak freely, and naturally tell all those things which it is so essential that you should know. When even they go a little too far, they should not be checked too abruptly, but permitted to finish what they were going to say, and then mildly reprov'd if they have said any thing improper. This counsel is principally necessary for people who keep their children at school; for it is chiefly there that they fall into idleness. Schools in general are well attended to at first; but after the lapse of years they often fall into a relaxation of rules. It is therefore proper, for people who put their children to school, to talk with them in their holidays, in order to learn what passes at the school, and how their studies are conducted.

If the instructors of your children reside in your house, still more address is necessary in obtaining this information; for if the children are too closely questioned, they will learn to despise their tutors, and the task of their education is impossible. It is needful, above all things, to have the respect and confidence of children. Take care, likewise, that you do not fall into another fault very common in these days—that of allowing your children an undue liberty, by permitting in them that familiarity which so readily degenerates into contempt, and through which a young child soon learns to hold himself so superior to his parents, as to be ready, upon all occasions, to give them a lesson. Is not this what one sees in many families, and what passes every day under your own eyes?

An opposite defect is, that of the persons who keep their children at so great a distance, that they never enjoy their confidence.

We have already observed, that there is in ge-

neral too much importance attached to mere accomplishments, to fashionable graces, and too little to morals and religion. People are very careful to form their children for the world and society; but who is there who takes care to form them to virtue, to give them the courage necessary to do good, and to support the evils of this life; or to form them to that probity, that venerable probity, so rare in this world, and with the mere appearance of which we see so many people contented! We are obliged sometimes to see our children weep, and even to cause their tears; but it is proper to make them understand, that the anxieties of this life are sent by God, as a means of eternal safety, and that it is He who directs all events.

People in general do not inspire their children with really religious sentiments; we are surprised to find, at the epoch of first communion, children so ill instructed in this respect; while very often these children, so ignorant of religion, belong to a superior class of society, and have parents who are good Christians. One may easily teach children that God has created the world, that He is all-powerful, that they must pray to Him and serve Him; but do we speak to them of Providence,—accustom them to refer to it in all the events of this life, and to place in it that entire confidence which can alone give them courage and support in misfortune? Not only, however, they are not duly taught in these respects, but they are exposed to imbibe contrary notions. How can they have just ideas, when false ones are constantly broached in their presence? What is the language of the saloons? do we not continually hear in them all that the Gospel condemns, boasted, praised, and exalted? Do we not every day see the most vicious persons, and those even whose vices are acknowledged, enjoy, because they are

rich, the greatest consideration; while those who are poor are treated with contempt, though full of merit? Does not the world treat as a weakness that forgiveness of injuries of which the Gospel makes so great a merit? Do we not frequently see a most unworthy person loaded with the courtesies of society, because he has some trifling graces and accomplishments; while another, of genuine merit and unimpeachable virtue, is made an object of ridicule, because he commits some solecism in fashionable manners? For five or six weeks, probably, an error of this kind will be remembered with mockery and sneers. What other effect can all this produce upon the mind of a child, except that of making him attach much importance to the usages of politeness, and very little to morality and religion?

Nothing is lost with children; they watch every thing, and people restrain themselves too little in their presence. If, then, a mother cannot avoid letting her child understand many of her own faults, she should at least exert so much sense as to point out the danger attending them; but this is rarely done, and the evil is left to germinate in the heart of the child.

Children should be reprov'd with moderation, especially for faults of little import; for more essential faults more severity should be reserved.

We must not let slip any opportunity for insinuating a good precept; in general we converse too little with children; it would be, notwithstanding, a very easy mode of giving them their lessons, and one which would not weary them.

Every body knows what is necessary for a good education. We talk admirably, we theorise to perfection; but practise quite another thing. It is a difficult and painful task, and therefore very few

will undertake it. Upon this, however, depends safety or eternal damnation ; for if, according to the language of the Scripture, we are answerable, soul for soul, body for body, how much must we answer in behalf of our children ! You have brought these children into the world, you gave them a life for which they did not ask you, and you owe them yet another—a Christian education. Women do not marry so very young but that they know perfectly well the obligation they are under as concerns the education of their children, and can comprehend the consequences attached to that duty. It is but a poor excuse to say, that they do not know that which, at any rate, from the moment they are mothers, they ought to learn.

This may remind us of another error of the present day. It is not so much that people do not concern themselves about their children, as that they do not concern themselves to any good purpose. They take pains enough, indeed, to place them in a good worldly position, to procure for them an estate, which is certainly their duty, but not the only one: an upright heart, virtue, and religion are above all these.

It may be displeasing to be told so, but it is nevertheless the fact, that parents, for the most part, consider their children as dolls that move about, grow bigger, walk, and talk. How other than as dolls do they consider them, when they boast of the beauty of their children, and repeat their little sayings? they delight themselves with the idea that their children will have wit. This child, which is thus made into a plaything, becomes soon a sort of idol, to which father, mother, servants, friends, must sacrifice; strangers even must occupy themselves with these children, or are annoyed by them, which is the same thing. It may be well, then, in

such a case, to say, "My child, be quiet; you are an annoyance." The child will do as he pleases, without any regard to your reproof; and should you venture to notice his defects, expect that his mother will take you to task. Is not this witnessed every day? Is it, then, surprising that this little being should be puffed up with pride, and regard itself as a sort of wonder? Is such a delusion its own fault? In the end, if it be a boy, it will take to avenge all affronts at the point of the sword; if a girl, with slanders and the bitterness of the tongue.

Let wise parents conduct their children in another manner: let them instruct them early in the truths of religion; let them teach them from the toils of life, instead of murmuring and even blaspheming Providence,—let them teach them, I say, the courage necessary to support those evils, and how they may develop the sentiments of honour and probity. All the world speaks of probity, but what man is there who truly possesses it in his closet or in the conduct of a lawsuit?

When you employ a tutor for your son, or a governess for your daughters, do not on that account suppose that you may yourself quit all care respecting their education. You ought to ascertain whether those persons have the virtues necessary to these employments; you ought to watch over them, to study their plan of education, and inform yourself of the conduct of your children. Instead of this, what is done? You assure yourself of a teacher's talents, of his information, because you pay for them, but the much more important point of principle, which is the foundation of all education, you neglect. If, on the other hand, you place your child at a school, what is then your chief concern? that the food should be abundant and good, that the child shall consume nearly the amount of its pen-

sion ; beyond this, if there be a good playground, good air, and good masters, it is enough ; morals and religion are still less regarded. Remember, then, that if you do not yourself educate your children, you are bound to overlook those who do.

Another grave error too, on your part, is that of making much of little faults, and passing over great ones. You are very anxious that your child should have good manners, and should hold himself upright ; things which are well in their way, but to which you attach much more importance than they merit. How often, too, is a poor child tormented about its carriage ; how many great reproaches are exhausted for puerile faults, and what words are wasted which should reprove great ones ! How so prodigious a severity should be exercised upon exteriors, and such a feebleness and carelessness with regard to morals, is more than we can comprehend.

We should always correct with mildness ; that correction which is administered with calmness and forbearance is always the most salutary : faults graver than usual must, of course, meet with a graver punishment. Our own ill-humour, however, too often urges us to correct our children. When we are out of temper, we are severe about trifles ; and when, on the contrary, we are pleased, every thing goes well, and a child will then escape with a very slight reproof for some great fault. I shall here make use of a comparison which may, perhaps, be displeasing, but which is unhappily too just. It is our duty to regard the education of children with the same care as a gardener bestows on the culture of his plants : see how careful he is as to the degree of sun and earth which they require, how abundantly he waters them, how he preserves them alike from the extremes of cold and heat ; he attends to them every day, every hour ;—such ought

to be the care of a mother for her children. She should study their characters ; what is proper for one is unsuited to another ; this requires to be excited, the other to be restrained. Another may require encouragement, and, being harshly treated, will suffer all his life from that timid and irresolute character which he acquired in his infancy. He, on the contrary, whom it was needful to subdue, being abandoned to a too great liberty, born with violent passions, which he was not taught to restrain, indulges in every excess, and becomes a scourge to society and to his family.

We must look out for opportunities ; there are every day twenty occasions for a salutary lesson. When one person behaves ill towards another, it is proper to point out to a child the fault of that person, in order that it may not imitate him. False maxims should be also exposed to children ; for they will often hear them in the world, and will then be beforehand aware of their fallacy. If a history be told to a child, it should contain a moral which his intellect can appreciate. In this mode he will not weary with his lessons, and they may gradually insinuate into his mind all the principles of good.

4. But it is above all in the bosom of her family that a woman should carefully consider how much she ought to withhold, and how much to concede. Those secret opportunities for conversation which occur between married people, ought not to be converted by the woman into theological disputes, in which, as is unhappily too often the case, she is continually arguing with and preaching to her husband. So far from converting a husband by these means, you will make him detest the devotion which you render so severe. It often happens that a husband has no religion ; he has been educated without principles ;

he sees his wife continually occupied in devotions that weary him ; is that the way to make him love them ? He would have her remain at home, and she is incessantly going out to masses and sermons ; he wishes to enjoy her society, in which he himself takes pleasure, and she knows not how to appreciate that happiness, the greatest which a woman can hope for. The husband who has no religion will believe that religion exacts these practices, and he will fly still farther from it ; he will be angered with the confessor, to whom he will impute all the blame, though he, on his part, may have given directly contrary advice. Ah, how much better is it for a wife to accomplish, with sweetness and complaisance, the conversion of her husband ; and her merit will be so much the greater before God, because of the sacrifice of her own will. I know that with pious persons nothing is more delightful than the exercise of their piety ; in depriving yourself, then, of hearing mass on some day which is not of obligation, of hearing a sermon, or joining in any other act of religion, do you think that you will lose the grace of God ? Are His graces, then, confined to particular places ? Will they not visit you as well in your own house as in the church ? Is it not disposition of the heart that attracts them ?

As a general rule, when a woman has a husband who is not religious, and her devotional practices appear to displease him, as the peace of the household is preferable to every thing, she ought to deprive herself of all that is not obligatory, and to hold only by that which is obligatory ; but then she ought to hold by this the more strongly, because she has abandoned the rest. It is not needful to do like some wives, who, yielding every thing and reserving nothing in their early married life, impose upon themselves a yoke from which they are never after-

wards released. Thus, if she yields one point of real duty, she may concede twenty more, and finally abandon all. In conclusion, then, exercise great complaisance in yielding what is not absolutely a duty, but yield not a fraction of that which is.

FRIENDSHIP.

1. He who has found a true friend has found a treasure, says the Holy Ghost. The Pagan philosophers themselves, as St. Thomas cites them, taught that to enjoy the felicity so rare in this mournful exile, it was necessary to have a true friend. Every labour undertaken for friendship is grateful, and man rejoices more in the good which he works for a friend, than the friend even does in receiving it.

2. But in proportion as this friendship is precious, so also is it rare. There are two names abused above all others in our days, the names of *philosophy* and *friendship*. We call him a philosopher who is strange in his conduct, uncivil in his behaviour, an infidel in his maxims, and uncertain in all his ways. We call him a friend who is our companion at table, in our walks, in conversation, or at the theatre.

3. It is much more easy to find an honest man or a charitable man, than to find a man who will be your friend. Every true friend must be an honest man, but every honest man is not a friend.

4. Real friendship, besides other conditions,

which, for the sake of brevity, we omit, requires, 1st, correct conduct; 2d, honesty of intention; and thirdly, a modest caution in the persons between whom it is contracted. With these conditions there may be a virtuous friendship between a man and woman; because God the Creator and Father of all has not placed one half of the human race in opposition to the other half: such a decree would be a contradiction of Himself.

5. The first condition for friendship is correct conduct. "Friendship," says St. Jerome, "either finds people similar in temper, or renders them so; we cannot long associate with the impious without participating in his impiety." The philosophers themselves said, "Tell me who are thy friends, and I will tell thee what is thy character." We may, then, decide very clearly upon a person's character from those of his friends.

6. A false friend, who must be a bad man, is much more dangerous than the false steward; this last only injures your property, but the first exposes it to every injury in every relation. He who is ensnared by a false friend falls into the greatest misfortunes; so much the more fatal, because they are neither known nor feared. Well, then, might the sage of antiquity say, "I can defend myself from my enemies, so that God keep me from false friends." Whoever, then, is vicious in his habits, or who counsels or applauds in you that which is vicious or reprehensible, is your betrayer, and not your friend. How many are there who count among

their friends persons who possess neither religion, prudence, nor character! These unfortunates are in more danger from the traitors whom they admit to their confidence, than are the navigators from the tempests of the sea.

7. But it is not enough that your friends be persons of correct conduct, they must be honest in their intentions; that is to say, they ought to love you not out of a vile interest, or a puerile sensibility, but through that esteem which springs from reciprocal virtues, cordiality, and consonance of genius.

8. The rich and great are surrounded by venal persons whom they stupidly call their friends; while in reality, they are only the friends of their tables, of their luxury, and the advantages derived from their notice. The great are not aware of this, because the false ever shines as well as the true, and while their prosperity continues, the adulation that seduces them continues also. Boetius himself, who was a great and enlightened philosopher, learned only in misfortune to know his flatterers; when he lost the royal favour and was shut up in a prison, he wrote dolorously, "Now I know my false friends: it was the consul whom they loved, and not Boetius; they were the friends of my fortune, and not of my person."

9. A virtuous friendship excludes that perilous sensibility, which is founded in the flatteries of the senses, and of which we have treated in "The mode of loving our neighbour." These lively sensibilities, according to the beautiful simile of Sidonius, are

the flowers which we value while they are fresh and odorous, but which, when they are withered, we cast away.

10. The last condition which true friendship exacts is a *modest caution*: undue liberties, unmeasured jests, illicit confidences, are the symptoms of a sensual, not of a friendly mind, and are as much opposed to true friendship, as is the obscurity of night to the light of day.

11. To avoid impositions, then, before fixing your friendship, try the three modes proposed by the great orator of the Latins, and approved by St. Augustin. 1st, Examine the person, to ascertain if he has the essentials necessary for true friendship; 2d, endeavour to put him to proofs, especially such as may be adduced from his self-interest. 3d, After the test of these proofs you may elect him as your friend, always remembering that a true friend is the rarest benefit in the world, and that he who flatters himself with easily finding them deceives himself, and mixes false with true friends.

III.

OUR DUTY TOWARDS OURSELVES.

Our duty towards ourselves embraces so many points, that it would be tedious to recount them all. The principal are those which are here named: Occupations, amusements, dress and ornaments, mor-

tification, liberty and calmness of soul, and to regard all events as coming from God.

OCCUPATIONS.

1. Even in that state of innocence in which Adam was placed in the terrestrial paradise, he was still employed in its cultivation. Not, indeed, says St. Chrysostom, that that fertile garden required cultivation, but it was requisite that Adam should be employed, otherwise idleness might have been perhaps a more fatal stumbling-block for his innocence than was furnished even by the serpent himself. Industry is the seed of virtue, and idleness that of vice.

2. Your occupations ought to be conformable to your condition, and must vary according to circumstances, because every occupation is not proper to every time and place.

3. Be not among those who amuse themselves with reading immoral poetry and novels; this is a prevailing fashion, and turns many heads. Such an occupation, says St. Chrysostom, is worse than idleness itself; it arms the most powerful passions that man has to combat, and, like an insidious enemy, it pleases and corrupts the appetite, till, even while believing ourselves victors, we are lost.

4. Occupy yourself if you will with reading, but read useful books, from which you may learn the duties of man either as a citizen, a Christian, a father, a son, husband, a master, or a friend. The duties of man are very numerous, yet they are so

neglected, that people, for the most part, die in the same ignorance of them in which they were born.

5. Do not forget the great book of God, the Scriptures, which have been explained to us by so many learned and elegant writers. If it would be held disgraceful to a physician to be ignorant of the most classic works on medicine, or to a lawyer if he was not versed in the code of the laws, how much more shameful is it for a Christian to be ignorant of the book of Christ—for one of the faithful not to know the book of his faith. That book from which the most renowned philosophers of the Gentiles drew those precepts which conciliated for them the esteem of the world. That book which was so closely studied by the first Christians, not merely by cultivated and literary people, but by the inferior classes, by the artisans, the husbandmen, the shepherds, who committed long passages to memory, and, with the exultation of a devout spirit, repeated those celestial words. With the reading of this Divine book your mind will be enlightened, and your heart improved; while you are pursuing a holy occupation.

1. The first man was condemned to labour, and, as we share his sin, we are condemned with him. According to St. Paul, he is unworthy of the bread that he eats who does not earn it. This decree would be executed with rigour, if God had not exercised some indulgence with regard to the rule. He has, however, accorded this only on two conditions: the first is, that they shall shew compassion to the

poor, on whom falls all the weight of the penance ; and the second is, that they shall be more humble and industrious in serving Him, since, being more sinful than the others, they are less penitent. This ought to humble them, besides that, being excused from those painful labours that exhaust the body and occupy the time, they ought to shew more gratitude and love, as they have more leisure and convenience. But nothing will render your labour more acceptable to God than that interior recollection, which fills the soul with sweetness. While your hands are employed, your heart may repose with God, and you may say with the prophet, "I set the Lord always in my sight ; He is at my right hand, that I be not moved !" You ought also to remember the divine manner in which the Blessed Virgin executed the most trifling actions —with what interior peace, what attention to God, what recollection, what humility ; what dispositions of prayer and humility she bore towards Him whom alone she sought to please. Remember, likewise, that the Blessed Virgin did nothing brilliant, nothing extraordinary, nothing that seemed above the condition of a woman compelled to support herself by her own industry ; and that meanwhile she rendered as much glory to God as those among the Apostles who were most zealous in the preaching of the Gospel, because she had as much obedience, as much humility, and as much love for God as the Apostles. This thought ought to encourage you, and convince you of that truth, so essential in morals, that as the things which are the greatest in the eyes of men are abominable in the sight of God, the most trifling and most contemptible things are very great and very elevated, when they are wrought with a great faith and a great love. —*Guide for a Christian Lady.*

AMUSEMENTS.

1. If industry and fatigue are necessary, so also are repose and recreation. "He who will never seek amusement," says St. Thomas, "is a dull and morose person, and falls into a reprehensible deficiency."

2. To make recreation lawful and virtuous, it must have three conditions; these are, 1st, innocence in its nature; 2d, that it be well ordered in its end; 3d, that it be taken in moderation.

3. Recreation ought to be innocent in its nature, susceptible of nothing intrinsically wrong, or that is forbidden by the laws; such as dissolute dances, immodest plays, and such like scandalous diversions.

4. It ought to be well ordered in its end, because it is not proper to seek pleasure and amusement for their own sakes, but only to relieve the weariness of the mind and the fatigue of the body. The amount of amusement should be fixed by this rule; it is proper to take just so much as may avail both for the body and mind. "It is in this manner," says St. Francis de Sales, "that the weary traveller stops upon his way; he does not stop for the sake of stopping, but only to obtain that food and rest which are necessary to enable him to finish his journey."

5. "Thus it is," said the moral philosopher whom St. Thomas quoted and praised, "that little amusement suffices for man, just as little salt is required for the seasoning of his meat."

6. Amusements should be considered in the same manner as our food ; some require more sustenance and others less, and so also it is with diversions.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTS.

1. There are four great rules which may guide us with regard to dress : 1st, it should be in accordance with our rank in life ; 2d, to our means ; 3d, to our age ; and 4th, to the condition of maid, wife, or widow ; whence St. Augustin reproves the married woman who dresses herself in black like a nun.

2. Our dress, besides manifesting our condition, answers the purpose of modesty, and defends us from the severity of the seasons. It is, then, a great sin to violate modesty by the very means that ought to preserve it ; and a still greater one to expose ourselves to cold, which may injure our health, in order to follow fashions dictated by caprice or levity, or by a vain and ridiculous extravagance, which will not accord either with Christian faith or human reason.

3. The excellent and pious Sir Thomas More, being acquainted with a young lady who risked her health by exposure to the rigour of the seasons, only for the pleasure of appearing a person of fashion and elegance, said to her : “ God will certainly do you an injustice if He do not send you to hell, seeing that you are so courageous and intrepid in suffering all kind of inconvenience for the sake of pleasing the devil and his followers.”

4. How much fatigue will not people endure for

the gratification of their vanity? A lady of fashion before her mirror, may be compared to a martyr among the executioners; about the martyr we see sharp combs and hot irons, and the same things are about the toilet of a lady; she, too, is a martyr, but her martyrdom is not that of faith, but of vanity.

5. If we provoke suffering, let it be for the glory of God, and hence for our own salvation; and not for the destruction of our souls, as well as the inconvenience of our bodies.

MORTIFICATION.

1. It is a great error to imagine that the passions of man are an evil in themselves; under a due guidance they are the instruments of great virtues. The proper mode of governing them is by mortification; the rudder steers the ship, the bridle restrains the horse, and mortification guides and subjects the passions of man.

2. There are two kinds of mortification, the exterior mortification of the body, and the interior mortification of the soul; a Christian is bound to the exercise of both, if he would assimilate himself with the great leader of the elect, Jesus Christ.

3. It must always be borne in mind that the degree of penance and mortification attempted, must not be such as to injure either life, strength, or health; of these things we are the depositaries, and not the masters. "Our body," as St. Augustin wisely observes, "is, like a poor sick creature, recom-

mended to the charity of the soul ; however manifold its wants, however grievous its infirmities, still ought they to be borne with by the charity of the soul ; it is bound to provide for the body, neither fomenting its passions nor neglecting its wants.

4. Be careful that your fasts and your abstinence do not serve to provoke your vanity, or that they are not the effect of your love of your own will. If they are not the effect of obedience they are repudiated by God, as He Himself says by the mouth of Isaiah, In your fasting you have followed your own will.

5. Do you wish not to mistake the reality of your mortification ? exercise it on your interior ; for as St. Bernard says, it consists in that denial of your own will from which you can have no just reason to excuse yourself. " If I tell you to fast," says St. Jerome, " you may reply that your strength is not sufficient ; if I prescribe alms, you may answer that you have not the means to bestow them ; but when I tell you to deny your own will, you are left without any excuses.

6. The best and most secure rule is that which St. Augustin followed with regard to perfumes, and which may apply to whatever else is agreeable to the senses. " I never think about them," he says ; " if they are not in my way, I do not seek them ; if they are, I do not reject them ; I am always ready either to do without them, or to make use of them."

7. Those mortifications which are not voluntary, or chosen by ourselves, as sickness, ill success in our business, the envy or insolence of others, when supported with resignation and a cheerful mind, are

of all mortifications the most meritorious, because they are sent from God, though the malice of others be His instrument. David, when he fled and was insulted by Semei, restrained the just wrath of his own followers, by telling them that God had commanded Semei to curse David.

1. Jesus Christ has commanded all His disciples to bear the cross, and they are bound to comply with His injunctions. This law is so essential to Christianity, that it is virtually renounced by those who refuse to suffer. You must be well aware of this ; you cannot fail to remember how St. Paul tells us of those who, in the name of Jesus Christ, crucify their flesh, with all its vices and desires ; how the old man of our evil inclinations should be crucified on His cross, and how we must bear within us the image of His death, and enter into the companionship of His suffering, if we would rise with Him to eternal life. But it often happens that we seek the cross at a distance, when it is close at hand ; we must shape it too in our own fashion ; we must choose it, and then we are content. Divine Providence, which has made our safety depend upon the cross, has crosses ready for us ; it is not needful to invent new ones. But those which are of our own invention please us, and we must please ourselves even to the cross. Our self-love sacrifices all things with resignation, provided that it be not called upon to sacrifice itself : it consents very readily to be the priest, so that it is not called upon to be the victim. But while this self-love, this self-will exists, every other evil exists with it ; it is itself the source of all our derangements ; it ought

itself to be nailed upon the cross. But it is not necessary that this should be done by our own hands ; as we do not leave to a criminal either the choice or execution of his punishment.

It properly belongs to God to determine the nature of our cross, as He determined that of His Son. He knows our weaknesses and our strength ; He knows when it is necessary to spare, and when to punish ; He penetrates even to those reserved secrets, and those privileged attachments, which we hide even from ourselves ; indeed, He knows infinitely better than we do, how and in what way to immolate our hearts. We have but to obey Him, and place ourselves in His hands, as His Son placed Himself in those of men ; that is to say, without resistance, and without murmurs : in the position of a lamb before him who holds the shears.

Do not be beforehand with your cross, or you may perhaps seek that which God does not intend to give you, or that is incompatible with His designs in your behalf ; but embrace, without hesitation, all those which His hand places each moment in your way. There is a providence in crosses, as well as in all other things of this life. Crosses are the bread that nourishes the soul, and God will never fail to distribute it. If you were in a state the most free, tranquil, and unembarrassed, you would have reason to fear such tranquillity ; but your life will always have a due proportion of bitterness while you continue faithful.

I implore you earnestly to keep your soul in peace, by this plain and simple rule of conduct. By depriving yourself of this liberty, by seeking too eagerly for mortifications, you will lose those which God is jealous of preparing for you Himself, and you will hurt under the pretext of advancing yourself. Be free, gay, and simple as a child, and cou-

rageous also as a child, who fears nothing, who says every thing ingenuously, who suffers us to take him in our arms, and, in a word, who knows nothing, foresees nothing, and determines nothing, but who enjoys a liberty and hardihood denied to older persons.

The painful things which interpose between God and ourselves are the crosses which we ought to bear meekly; and which, if we do so, will be the means of uniting us to Him. The things which confound and grieve our pride are of much more avail to us than those which animate our virtue. We have need of being abased, like St. Paul at the gates of Damascus; we must learn that we have no resource, save in God.

Nature inspires us only with a proud and disdainful courage, and irritates us against those whom God makes the instruments of our humiliation. He must bear his cross in silence, with a humble, peaceable courage, who would be great in God, and little in himself; great in sweetness and patience, and little in humility. When God touches us to the quick with humiliations, so much the better: he is the charitable physician who applies a remedy to the diseases which he seeks to cure. Let us be silent, let us adore the hand that strikes, and open not our mouths, except to say: "I have deserved it; however bitter this chalice may be, like Jesus Christ, I must swallow it to the dregs!" He died for those who gave Him death; and He has taught us to love, to bless, and to pray for those who make us suffer.

We ought to redouble our prayers in the time of trouble and temptations. The heart of Jesus Christ, expiring on the cross, will bestow all that our own has not, to enable us to love those whom our pride would have us hate.

The cross we like is but half a cross, because love sweetens every thing ; we suffer much only when we love but little. Oh, how unhappy is he who does not suffer in Jesus Christ ; and how happy those who suffer much ; since, in this world, we can be purified only by suffering ! God proves us by our weaknesses and dependence ; He turns every thing to our profit. We are in want of all our crosses. When we suffer much, it is because we have strong attachments, from which we require to be withdrawn. We resist, we retard this Divine operation ; we repulse this salutary hand ; and the task has to be commenced again ; we should have acquitted ourselves better if we had given ourselves up entirely to God.

Crosses are our daily bread, and the soul requires its daily portion of suffering, as much as the body demands its daily portion of food. We are in want of the cross ; for we should be utterly worthless, if God did not turn the world into bitterness, to detach us from it. The cross is never without fruit, when it is received in the spirit of sacrifice ; in accepting it, we should adore the hand of God, which burdens, in order to sanctify us. Happy he who is at all times ready ; who never says, " It is too much ;" who counts, not upon himself, but upon the All-Powerful ; who wishes for no consolation but that which God gives, and who submits wholly to His will.

Crosses are so many signs of mercy, and a great harvest for faithful souls ; so that though nature may be afflicted, faith ought to rejoice ; in them we find peace in submission and the unreserved sacrifice even of the purest pleasures. It is upon the cross that God tests the soul, which He would detach from all things, save Himself. What remains then, but to embrace that cross which He tenders

to suffer that crucifixion? When He has crucified, He consoles us; but not after the manner of creatures, who administer a poisonous consolation, that feeds the venom of our self-love; His consolations are solid and true.—*Fenelon*.

PERFECTION.

1. The Christian is not obliged to be perfect, but he must, nevertheless, fix his thoughts upon perfection, he must tread in its paths, and by constant exertions he may advance some way. This is the doctrine of the Saints Chrysostom, Augustin, Thomas, and Bernard.

2. Upon the ladder of Jacob, the emblem of Christian perfection, the angels were seen occupied in two diverse movements, some ascending and others descending, not one remained stationary; and this was to denote that those who do not approach nearer to God retrograde from Him. The boatman who rows against the tide, if he does not make way with his oars, is driven back by the contrary current.

3. The mode, then, of obtaining perfection, is not in accomplishing great and extraordinary things, but in doing little things well, as we are told by St. Bernard.

4. Instead, then, of multiplying those pious practices, which often, instead of recreating, sadden the spirit, study to be perfect in your daily conduct,

doing every thing with repose of mind, kindness of heart, and purity of intention. Thus, when you are not able conveniently to accomplish your accustomed devotions, shorten them, and do so with good temper. Recur upon this point to what was said in treating of prayer.

5. Above all, endeavour to attain perfection in the duties of your state; in this consists the most sublime perfection. Wherefore is Ambrosius a saint? Because, being a bishop, he worthily discharged all the duties of a bishop. Wherefore was Louis, the King of France, a saint? Because he worthily discharged the duties of a king. And thus it is with all the heroes of Christianity; whence St. Paul says, "Let each one be perfect according to his vocation."

6. God commanded, in creation, that all plants should produce fruit, each according to its kind; hence divers plants produce divers fruits. Every mystical plant, the type of the soul, ought to bear fruit of holiness according to its kind; that is, its condition, for there are various modes of being devout and holy; Elias in the desert, and David upon the throne,—an apt lesson for those who, being in the school, wish themselves in the cloister, and being in the palace, would fain live in the hermitage; such fruits as these are good, but not proper to the plant that produces them.

LIBERTY AND CALMNESS OF SOUL.

1. St. Paul teaches, that where there is the Spirit of the Lord, there also is a sweet liberty and calmness of soul. There are two means of acquiring this calmness: first, by a virtuous and magnanimous contempt of the temptations that attack us; and, secondly, by shunning melancholy.

2. He who is not tempted will not be crowned. The palm is given only to him who conquers; and he cannot conquer who will not fight.

3. On the first attack of temptations, especially against purity or religion, continue such occupation as may engage you at the time, without giving any reply, or seeming to notice the suggestion of the enemy; or you may employ some brief ejaculation which has not a direct reference to the temptation: as, for example, "O Jesus, inflame me with Thy love; when will my heart burn with the fire of Thy love?"

4. Make, in the morning, a protestation, that you will neither consent nor reply either to the temptations or to the tempter.

5. Sometimes say to yourself, I do not understand, I ought not to understand, I will not understand. I cannot; because these things regard the infinite nature of God; because the true believer employs humble submission, not curious research; and, since it is impossible that I should understand all, I desire not to understand any thing that God has been pleased to envelop in mystery, but to give

Him a testimony of my true submission, saying, with Jesus Christ, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed!"

6. Do not trouble yourself about your temptations, or your very fear will make them last; besides, temptation felt and not consented to, is not a sin, but a merit.

7. Be obedient, and you will be calm. "No disquieting thought," says St. Francis de Sales, "can proceed from God, who is the King of peace." Whenever, therefore, a restless fear rise in your heart, either as to the state of your conscience or your salvation, regard it not as an inspiration, but a temptation.

8. Remember that to labour against scruples is not to labour against conscience; thus, you have satisfied the duties of conscience when you have fulfilled the prescriptions of obedience. Read carefully the third and fourth chapters of the fifth part of Philothea, where you will find important advice upon temptations.

9. Above all, guard against melancholy, which St. Francis de Sales so justly calls a bitter winter, which destroys the beauties and attractions of the soul, and freezes all its powers. The melancholy man resembles the sick, whose stomach refuses all nourishment, and is afflicted alike by good food and bad.

10. At the first approach, then, of melancholy, fly so dangerous an enemy, seek employments, company, amusements, any thing to escape from that

gloomy demon ; it is easy to prevent him entering your heart, but not to chase him thence when he has once made it his abode.

11. Nehemiah told the people of Israel, that the holy joy which had its source in the Lord, was their whole strength.

1. Melancholy frequently attacks us when in seeking God we do not feel sufficiently sensible of His presence. To wish to feel is not to wish to possess Him, it is merely that self-love wishes to be assured of possessing Him, thereby to derive consolation.

Nature, depressed and discouraged, is impatient to withdraw from the pure faith which is its only true support ; it is all abroad, it wishes to feel its own improvements. Its pride is either provoked by the sight of its faults, or it mistakes that wounded pride for a sentiment of penance.

In our self-love we would fain have the pleasure of beholding ourselves perfect ; we murmur that we are not so ; we are impatient, haughty, and ill-humoured, both with ourselves and others. Lamentable error ! how can we accomplish the work of God in that vexation, how can we unite ourselves to the God of peace when we have lost the peace of our souls ? Martha ! Martha ! why troublest thou thyself with so many things for the service of Jesus Christ ? it needs but for thee to love Him, and remain attentive at His feet. When we properly abandon ourselves to God, we do nothing that is useless ; we submit in perfect confidence to His guidance ; for the future we wish without any reserve that which God wills, and shut our eyes to

all beyond, while we apply ourselves to accomplish that which He wills for the present.

Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. This daily fulfilment of the will of God is the beginning of His reign over our hearts, and more than our daily bread. We should believe ourselves guilty of a heathenish defiance, if we sought to penetrate into that future which God has chosen to conceal; it must be left to Him, it is for Him to make it short or long, sweet or bitter, as seems good in His eyes.

The most perfect preparation for the future, whatever it may be, is to die to our own will, and live only for that of God.

As the manna possessed all tastes, this disposition contains all the graces and all the sentiments proper to all the circumstances in which it may please God to place us.—*Fenelon*.

TO REGARD ALL EVENTS AS COMING FROM GOD.

1. All our inquietudes proceed from our regarding the things that grieve or annoy us as the effects of nature or human malice, and not as the ineffable and loving decrees of supernal wisdom.

2. Christ has said, and this is an article of faith, that not a hair falls from our heads but by the will of our heavenly Father. All the fury of the most wicked men, and even of the devils themselves, could not avail to hurt us, but by the will of God. God does not will, nor cannot will sin; but He wills for us the suffering which the sins of others so often

inflict upon us. He does not, for example, will the theft, which is a sin, but he wills to us the damage and loss which are the consequences of the theft. Thus, Job did not attribute to the Chaldeans, nor to the fire, nor to the wind, nor to the devil, the misfortunes with which he was loaded; he attributed them to the Divine will, because he looked not at the rod which struck him, but at the Divine hand that directed the blow; whence he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

3. Consider, then, the will of God in whatever happens; the things that you find most grievous and humiliating are ordained for your ultimate good by that heavenly Father who decrees all events for the benefit of His children. He sends tribulation, as the physician prescribes a salutary medicine, which, though displeasing to the taste of the sick, the loving physician will have him take, because he knows that it will cure his malady. In the faithful practice of this sort of resignation, the most sublime holiness consists; because, as is observed by St. Jerome, "he who practises it has no will apart from the will of God."

1. Let us abandon ourselves, let us love no more with an ill-regulated love, and the will of God, which will develop itself in all things, will console us each moment with that which God has done in us, and for us. The contradictions of men, their

inconstancies, even their injustice, will then only appear as the effects of the wisdom, justice, and immutable goodness of God. We shall see how infinitely good God is, who conceals Himself under the weakness of blind and corrupt men. Thus that deceitful picture of the world, which passes like a theatrical scene before our eyes, shall become for us a real spectacle worthy of God's eternal beneficence. How can we attend to men? They are weak, inconstant, blind; some will not do what they can, others cannot do what they would. Nature is a broken reed; if we lean upon it, it cannot support us, and it pierces our hand. However great men may appear, they are nothing in themselves; but when God is great in them, He makes use even of their extravagant humours, of their vexed pride, of their dissimulation, their vanity, and all their other insane passions, in that eternal counsel upon which He has elected them; He employs them within and without, the corruption of other men, our own imperfections, and our own sensibility, and, in a word, He employs all to our sanctification; He moves heaven and earth to save those whom He holds dear; He leaves nothing undone which can purify and render us worthy of Him.

Let us rejoice, then, when our heavenly Father tests us by interior and exterior temptations; that He does not, on the contrary, render us all that is fair for this life, and all that is terrible for the next. Let us rejoice; for it is by such sorrows that our faith, more precious than gold, is purified. Let us rejoice in proving the nothingness and deception of all that is not of God; for it is by this crucifying experience that we are torn from ourselves, and from the desires of this life. Let us rejoice; for it is through the griefs of this travail that the new man shall be born in us. What, shall we be dis-

couraged, when the hand of God hastens to finish its work? Would we have Him every day doing and undoing? we trouble ourselves; our cowardice and impatience stop the hand of God. Piety, without its cross, is but piety of the fancy.

Whilst we remain absorbed in ourselves, we are the butts for the contradictions of men, for their malice and their injustice; our humours expose us to those of others, our passions encounter those of our neighbours, our desires are so many open ways that expose us to the attacks of men; our pride, which is incompatible with that of our neighbour, swells like the waves of an angry sea; every body assaults us, every body repulses us; we are defenceless on all sides through the sensibility of our passions and the jealousy of our pride. There is no peace to be hoped for by him who lives at the mercy of a crowd of insatiable and greedy desires; and he can in no way satisfy that self who is at once so jealous, so fastidious, and so sullen. Hence it is with him, in his commerce with his neighbours, as with the sick who have kept their beds so long that you can touch no part of their bodies without hurting them. He who is sick of self-love is just as tender; he cannot be touched without giving utterance to cries of pain; touch him only with the end of the finger, and he will think himself flayed. Put in opposition to this delicacy, the rudeness of the neighbour, who is himself full of imperfections to which he is blind, his hatred of our defects, which is not less bitter than that which we bear towards his, and you will see at once how the children of Adam accomplish their own punishment; one half the human race is rendered unhappy by the other half, who make the first half miserable in their turn. Thus in all nations, in all cities, in all communities, in all families, and often even between two friends,

does this martyrdom of self-love go on. The only resource for obtaining peace is to seek it out of ourselves.

We must relinquish all self-love, so that we may have nothing to fear, nothing to lose, nothing to take care of; and then we may taste that true peace reserved for "men of good will;" that is to say, who have no will but the will of God, which they make theirs. Then men cease to have power over us; they cannot molest us through our desires and our fears; then we will all that God wills, and nothing that He does not will. This is to be inaccessible to the enemy,—to become invulnerable. Man can do nothing against us save that which God gives him power to do, and all that God gives him the power to do, being therefore the will of God, likewise becomes our will. In this state consists the treasure which no hand can ravish from us. If our reputation is defamed, we are not disturbed, for we know that it is good to be humiliated when God so wills. We find ourselves deceived in our friendships;—so much the better; it is the truest of all our friends who is jealous of all the rest, and detaches us from them to purify our affections. We are importuned, subdued, wearied; but God knows it, and it is enough, we love the hand that bruises, the peace which is found amid our pains. Happy peace which follows us to our cross; we will that which has it, and we will nothing that has it not. The more perfect this self-abandonment, the more profound will be our peace; if we remain enslaved by any one desire, our peace will be imperfect; but if we break all ties, our liberty will be without bounds. Though I am threatened with opprobrium, anguish, and death, I still hear the voice of Jesus Christ, which says to me, "Fear not those who can kill the body, but do no more." How

feeble are those who can destroy life, how short is their power! they can but break a vessel of earth, which could at any time destroy itself; to advance a little, this death is a deliverance when we shall escape from their hands into the bosom of God, where all is tranquil and unchanged.

Suffering is the lot of the earth, and most unhappy are those who have their consolation in this world, for assuredly they will have none in the next. This life is a season of temptation and trial, for the purpose of correcting, purifying, and detaching our souls. When we have no more to suffer, there is no reason that we should live; the sick person who is cured is sent out of the hospital; it is suffering only that works our cure. As for the persons who injure us, we must think only of pardoning them; we must merely regard them as the means which God employs to exercise our humility, our patience, our love of the cross: we shall one day see before God how useful to us have been those persons whose actions crucify us with Christ; the sufferings which they cause will soon pass away, but the fruit that it shall bear will be eternal.—*Fenelon.*

Short Daily Prayers,

WITH

REFLECTIONS FOR ASSISTING AT MASS, AND PRAYERS
BESEECHING CONFIDENCE IN GOD FOR EVERY DAY
IN THE WEEK.

NOTICE.

“ And when you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites, that love to stand and pray in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men ; Amen I say to you, they have received their reward.” (Matthew vi. 5.)

If a great many words, then, distinguish the prayer of the hypocrites, a holy fervour should mark that of the Christian. In very brief prayers, resolutions and affections may be formed, without which our prayers are but sterile mechanism of the tongue, not a religious act of the spirit.

You ought to particularise certain points, so as to reflect, or aspirate more or less, according to your pleasure.

MORNING PRAYER.

I adore Thee, O great God, sovereign good and infinite goodness ; I would fain adore Thee ; inasmuch as Thou art adorable, infinite, Thou shouldst be my adoration ; and I humbly offer Thee that adoration which the humanity of Jesus Christ Thy Son rendered to Thy divinity. Thou, O Lord, art my only beginning and last end. I would wish to order all my actions for Thy glory, for which alone I was created, but from Thee only can I look for the grace necessary for this work ; if Thou do not assist me, I shall become in a moment the most ungrateful among men, the worst among sinners. Vouchsafe, then, to aid in repulsing all temptations, and grant that the protestation I now make may avail not only against the temptations of this day but of my whole life. O Jesus, Thy love is above all things ; teach me to forget all things in Thy love. O most holy Mary, sweet and amiable Mother, my angel guardian, and all my holy protectors, be my defence and my aid, that I may live in God, and for God, and die in His holy love.—Pater, Ave.

EVENING PRAYER.

Father of Mercy, I humbly thank Thee for the gifts that Thou hast bestowed on me this day. I would fain that my thanks should correspond with Thy benefits. Accept, then, in my name, those

which Jesus Christ offers Thee as the advocate and mediator for sinful men. I thank Thee in Him, and for Him. How ungrateful have I been, O my God, for Thy manifold mercies; how many sins have I committed; I detest, I abominate them. But if in my sins I have ceased to be Thy son, Thou hast not ceased to be my Father; regard not, then, O merciful Father, the evil which I have committed, but Thine own infinite goodness, and that which Thou hast done for my salvation. From henceforth, O Lord, I will suffer all things rather than sin. I resign myself to sleep, in obedience to Thy providence; I deprecate every assault, every temptation of the enemy; I would that my every breath should be an aspiration for Thy love.

Shower down Thy benediction, O Lord, upon my soul, upon this family, this chamber, this house. Thou holy angel, watching always by my side, do thou love and praise our God in my behalf. When shall I see that day of eternal consolation, when repose will be a perpetual canticle of love?

Pater, Ave.

ACT OF FAITH.

I believe firmly, O my God, that Thou art one in essence, and three in persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. I believe in the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the Divine Son, undertaken to satisfy Thy Divine justice, and cancel our sin. I believe that Thy mercy will crown the just

in paradise with an eternity of happiness, and punish the wicked with an eternity of misery in hell. I am ready to shed my blood in confirmation of this precious and Divine faith, which I have received from Thy infinite goodness.

ACT OF HOPE.

Through Thy infinite mercies, O my God, and through the merits of Jesus Christ, I hope to obtain pardon for my sins, and the glory of paradise. To this, I know, I must myself contribute by good works; give me grace, O Lord, I beseech Thee, to work according to Thy will.

ACT OF THE LOVE OF GOD.

That alone which is good is to be loved, and God is the sovereign goodness. Love, O my soul, this infinite goodness, and learn in it to love thy neighbour. If thy neighbour offend thee, grant him pardon, not because his offence may deserve it, but for the sake of Jesus Christ. Jesus has loved you, pardon your neighbour for His sake.

ACT OF CONTRITION.

Almighty God, Thou art the only and supreme good, and sin is the only and supreme evil. All the miseries of this world are occasioned by sin, and there is no evil without it. O fatal moments, in

which my sins have made me the enemy of God. I have renounced the eternal kingdom of the Blessed, I have condemned myself to the eternal prisons of hell. How often have I not outraged that sovereign good, that sovereign goodness that created me with so much love, and redeemed me with so much blood ! But may I not hope for pardon from that God who has so often promised His forgiveness to poor sinners ? For what has He given His blood but to redeem me ? Is there not joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth ? to doubt it would be the worst of sins. Ah, most gracious Lord, I have every thing to fear from my weakness, but every thing to hope from Thy goodness. From henceforth let me suffer, let me die, but never permit me to sin.

Brief Reflections

TO AID US IN ASSISTING DEVOUTLY AT MASS.

PRAYER AT THE BEGINNING OF MASS.

I believe, O my God, that in the sacrifice of the Mass is daily renewed that sacrifice which Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross. I believe that it is renewed for the glory of Thy Divine name, for the sanctification of the just, and for the salvation of sinners. I humbly implore Thee, O Father of Mercies, to purify my heart before being present at the holocaust of the Lamb without spot. Be far

from me all thoughts of earth, while I assist at that greatest work of heaven, which God Himself cannot surpass. Jesus, Mary, all ye holy angels, be my aid!

AT THE CONFITEOR.

I know, O Lord, and detest my sins, I likewise know and admire Thine infinite goodness. Alas, which is the greatest, my wickedness or Thy mercy? But since Thy mercies far exceed all the sins of men, vouchsafe that it may descend on me, and give me a humble and contrite heart.

AT THE KYRIE ELEISON.

My miseries, O Lord, form the throne of Thy mercy: in proportion as I am wretched so do I need Thy mercy. O Jesus, be most merciful to the most grievous of sinners.

AT THE EPISTLE.

Our most holy religion was confirmed by the predictions of the prophets, and the teaching of the Apostles. Give me grace, O Holy Spirit, to profit by it to my enlightenment and salvation.

AT THE GOSPEL.

I thank Thee, O God, for having bestowed on me the Divine light of Thy Holy Gospel: what

would all other gifts avail me without that of faith ? O adorable faith, I would wish to live in thy bosom, and to die for thy glory. Never let me be led astray by human respect. The precepts of the gospel, and not the maxims and usages of the world, shall form my delight and my glory. Henceforth I hate that deluded and deluding world, even as it is hated by Jesus Christ.

AT THE OFFERTORY.

O eternal Father, accept for Thy own glory, and the salvation of the world, the perfect sacrifice of Thy Divine Son, who made Himself both priest and victim, even to the sacrifice of the cross. Vouchsafe that my soul may feel the salutary effects of this sacrifice. Be comforted, O my heart, Jesus has rendered satisfaction for thee.

AT THE ORATE FRATRES.

The creature can offer nothing to the Creator that can be worthy of Him. I unite myself, therefore, to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which can alone merit any thing in my behalf. I have no wish beyond Him. O God of love, I do not seek any thing but to love Thee.

AT THE SURSUM CORDA.

Thou art created, O my soul, not for earth, but

for heaven. Elevate, then, thy thoughts and thy affections : learn not to be of the earth, earthy, but of the heavens, heavenly.

AT THE SANCTUS.

O Thou who art the God of all holiness, and who hast commanded us all to be holy, Thy grace alone can enable me to obey Thy commands. To that grace I confide myself, and exclaim with a great hero of Christianity : “ I will seek to be a saint, a great saint, and immediately a saint.”

AT THE MEMENTO FOR THE LIVING.

Thou, O Lord, art the common Father. Bestow, then, upon all Thy children the beneficial effects of this unspotted sacrifice ; exalt the Church, Thy spouse ; assist her visible head, the Pope ; extirpate heresy and infidelity, let peace prevail among Christian princes. I here recommend to Thee our bishop, our sovereign, the state, my family relations, benefactors, and enemies, and all others for whom I am bound to pray by the dictates of justice, gratitude, or charity.

AT THE ELEVATION OF THE HOST.

I adore Thee, O Jesus, who made Thyself an offering of propitiation for us. Oh, grant that my heart may become a pure offering, holy and pleasing in Thy sight.

AT THE ELEVATION OF THE CHALICE.

I adore, O Jesus, in this sacred chalice, Thy precious blood shed upon the cross for our salvation. Oh, descend Thou upon my soul, to purify and sanctify it. O eternal Father, vouchsafe to remember how the blood of the ancient Abel cried to Thee for vengeance against his murderer, Cain ; so even does the blood of the new Abel cry out for mercy in our behalf. Oh, may the blood and wounds of Jesus be our aid.

AT THE MEMENTO FOR THE DEAD.

Remember, O Lord, that the souls whom Thou dost punish in purgatory, as their judge, are yet loved by Thee as a father. Bestow, then, upon them the beneficial effects of this unspotted sacrifice, and especially upon those to whom I have been united by the bonds of justice, charity, or gratitude. Call, I beseech Thee, those poor exiles to their true country ; and receive those loving children for eternity into Thy fatherly bosom.

AT THE PATER NOSTER.

Thou, O ineffable God, art our Father. Our Father, because Thou hast created us with so much love. Our Father, because Thou hast redeemed us with so much blood. Endow us, we beseech Thee, with grace to seek only Thy glory, as becomes the

children of such a Father. We were created by Thee, we are governed by Thee, let us live only for Thee.

AT THE DOMINE NON SUM DIGNUS.

God only can be worthy of receiving God ; how, then, can a soul so sinful as mine merit so great a happiness ! But Thou, O Lord, regardest not Thy greatness, but Thy mercy. Thou willest that I come to Thee, as one sick to the physician who can heal him, as one poor to the rich lord who can assist him. O God of love, behold at Thy feet the poorest, the most infirm of Thy creatures. Unite me to Thyself, and I shall become rich and whole in Thy sight. Work, I beseech Thee, this miracle worthy of Thy omnipotence and charity.

AFTER THE COMMUNION.

Thou, O Jesu, hast consummated the sacrifice, dying upon the cross in obedience to Thy heavenly Father. Give me grace, I beseech Thee, to fulfil all my life the precepts of Thy holy Gospel. I wish to do only that which is Thy will ; I wish to live and die in conformity to Thy Divine pleasure.

AT THE CONCLUSION OF MASS.

I return Thee humble thanks, O Lord, that Thou hast permitted me, the most unworthy of Thy creatures, to bear a part in this great sacrifice. Pardon,

O Lord, all my distractions; and may Thy merits enable me to enter the august temple of that heavenly country, where the great sacrifice of Thy love is fulfilled, and where the soul lives eternally in God, and God in the soul.

Additions to the preceding Instructions.

HUMAN RESPECT.

1. There are certain men whom we must respect for their condition; but we ought not, therefore, to yield to their passions, nor suffer their example or authority to draw us from the practice of piety.

2. You have nothing to do but to seek the glory of God, the good of your neighbour, and the laws of honesty. This may be done with decision, and yet with modesty and urbanity. Upon this point it would be well to read the first and second chapters of the fourth part of the Philothea.

PLAN OF RESOLUTIONS.

1. It is not advisable to begin a great many pious practices at one time. We should attempt them separately and successively, commencing by the subjugation of that passion which seems to be our prevailing one.

2. We call the dominant passion that to which we most frequently yield, and which nourishes all the rest; take away the root, and you destroy the branches.

3. You ought to conquer your prevailing passion as a valiant captain conquers a hostile fortress, step by step.

4. For example, if your ruling passion is anger, determine, in the first place, that you will not speak when you feel your choler rise, and renew this determination two or three times a day, asking pardon when you fail to observe it.

5. When you are able to fulfil this resolution with ease, then pass on to another, as, for instance, to vanquish every thought of impatience and anger; then, not to bear ill-will towards the persons who offend you; after that, to answer with mildness those even who address you rudely; and finally, to acknowledge the will of God in the things most disagreeable to yourself, and thank Him for having chosen you to participate in His precious chalice, and the cross of His love.

6. Some saints counsel the use of some slight act of mortification, or an act of the love of God, or of hope, whenever you shall have failed in the fulfilment of a resolution. To do this is very well, but there is no sin in the neglect or occasional remissness of this rule.

7. When, in this progressive mode, you have obtained the mastery over your passions, you may then have some chance of acquiring the virtues.

Here, also, you must begin with things that are easy to accomplish, and advance gradually towards those that are more difficult.

8. General resolutions, as, for instance, that we will be cautious in our speech, patient, chaste, mild, and so forth, are commonly of very little worth.

9. It is indeed as St. Francis de Sales said, that our self-love is a busy body that attempts a great deal, and is perfect in nothing. But the rule of prudence, and of the Saints, is to attempt but a little at a time, and perfect that little by degrees.

Brief Reflections.

A METHOD OF MEDITATING UPON CONFIDENCE IN THE DIVINE MERCY FOR EVERY DAY IN THE WEEK.

Presumption and distrust are the two great impediments that interpose between our souls and the Divine mercy. I shall not pause to consider those vile and presumptuous minds that defy and outrage their Father in proportion to His mercy and goodness. I wish to fortify those weak minds that consider their own infirmities more than the Divine clemency, and which, therefore, were beyond any reason for fear.

REFLECTIONS FOR SUNDAY.

1. All the attributes of God are equally infinite ; but the effects of His mercy are the most copious ;

hence St. Paul calls Him a God rich in mercies. How, then, is it, that we cannot confide in so good a God? is it because we fear His justice? Let it, then, be remembered that He calls Himself the Father of mercy and of pardon, never the Father of punishment and wrath.

2. Thus our miseries form the very throne of the Divine mercy; if there were no miseries to compassionate, no sins to cancel, God would be merciful in Himself, but not out of Himself, because there would be nothing to call for His mercy. Why, then, do you alarm yourself so much for your wickedness, instead of placing confidence in His mercy?

3. The greater our sins, the more is the Divine omnipotence and goodness glorified in cancelling them. It is a glorious thing for a king to humble his rebels; but it would be unworthy of his grandeur to employ severities against them when they throw themselves on his clemency.

REFLECTIONS FOR MONDAY.

1. We fear the justice of God; but that has been fully satisfied by Jesus Christ; and the satisfaction which He offered was infinitely greater than even the debt owed by our sins. It is, therefore, superfluous to fear a just and offended God, after He has been satisfied and disarmed by a compassionate God.

2. God the Father has yielded the faculty of judg-

ing us to His incarnate Son, who is our brother, our friend, and our Saviour; will He, then, condemn you, who died on the cross because you should not have condemnation, but mercy and salvation? It is more easy for a sinner to become just than for a God to become man; God accomplishes His own incarnation to redeem us; it is easier for us to be justified and saved.

REFLECTIONS FOR TUESDAY.

1. The incarnate God has said, that He came into the world, not to call the just, but sinners to repentance. Innocence did not invite Him; it was the cry of sin that He heard. Adam sinned, and God was made man. Our guilt was the sole motive of our redemption. O ineffable goodness; and still more ineffable malice, not to confide in such goodness!

2. How many ways does not Jesus Christ employ to win our confidence! Was He not made man to suffer with us? was He not a little child to give us an easy access to Him? was He not poor to enrich us, a victim to purify us, a mediator to save us? and shall we indulge in vain fears, after so many proofs of love, so many incentives to confidence?

3. Who can behold a God weeping over the desolation of Jerusalem, sighing at the sepulchre of Lazarus, lamenting with Jeremiah the ruin of the soul, and not promise himself pardon from that mercy which desires so earnestly to bestow it?

REFLECTIONS FOR WEDNESDAY.

1. It is enough to remember the deeds of Jesus in the world to awaken a holy confidence in His mercy. He discoursed with sinners, He ate with sinners, He adopted sinners. The Pharisees slandered Him, and He called them blind, and leaders of the blind. He, then, is blind who does not compassionate sinners; but much more blind is the sinner who does not confide in the mercy promised by his divine Saviour.

2. Peter said to Christ: "Keep far from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man!" But Christ told him not to fear. Will you, then, indulge a fear which Christ forbids?

3. Be not disturbed by the number of your sins. However great your malady, the physician who undertakes to cure it is still greater. The most indigent of the poor are preferred for the alms of the virtuous rich. A hospital erected for the poor does not shut its gate on the most miserable among them; they are rather chosen before the others.

REFLECTIONS FOR THURSDAY.

1. Jesus Christ has always received the penitent sinner with joy. The prodigal son was honoured by his father, on his return, more than he who had been faithful; the good shepherd that left the obedient sheep in the fold to search for that which had gone astray, are signs of that great truth, which ought to suffice for our consolation.

2. But Jesus was not content with instructing us upon this truth with parables only, He made it evident by the most positive facts. The notorious sinner Magdalen became the most loving and beloved disciple of Jesus ; Paul the persecutor of the Church became the most active among the Apostles. The good thief is in one moment canonised and glorified with his crucified Redeemer ! And yet we fear, and are distrustful.

3. Neither did Jesus Christ elect, as the visible head of His Church, the innocent John, but the penitent Peter, who, having himself sinned, might know how to compassionate sinners. Will sinners, then, still hesitate to confide in the mercy of this most merciful Lord ?

REFLECTIONS FOR FRIDAY.

1. Whoever wishes to acquire true and generous confidence should fix his heart and mind on the wounds of Jesus Christ. These are the eloquent tongues that implore love and pardon for us.

2. When you are tempted to despond, say to the Eternal Father, Behold me, O Lord, in the person and the wounds of Thy crucified Son, and let them plead for my pardon ; has He not even more infinitely merited Thy mercy for me than I have merited Thy wrath ?

3. The poisoned Israelites, on looking at the erected image of the serpent, were cured of their mortifying wounds. Like this is the image of Jesus

on the cross. Behold it with love, look up to it with confidence, and you will be presently healed and revived.

REFLECTIONS FOR SATURDAY.

1. As courage is the road to salvation, so also is distrust the direct road to damnation. Cain, who was the first reprobate of the Old Testament, was not condemned for the murder of Abel, but for his despair of pardon. Judas, who was the first reprobate of the New Testament, was not condemned for his betrayal of our Lord, but for his despair of obtaining pardon for that betrayal. Who, then, is there who will not fear the very name of distrust?

2. This distrust is the most ingenious temptation of our enemy; and the more terrible, as it is so little feared. Peter, when sinking in the sea, accused only the wind; but Christ accused his diffidence when He said to him, "O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?"

3. God punishes with His justice those who will not profit by His mercy! Abandon yourself, then, in His bosom, and say, with St. Augustin: "God knows all my necessities through His infinite knowledge; He can supply them all through His infinite power; He will supply them through His infinite love. O my God, let my care, then, be, to aspire to Thee, to love Thee, to repose in Thee, my Father, my Saviour, my Friend, my Spouse, my all, my God, and my all.

Brief Aspirations**TO ACCOMPANY THE ORDINARY ACTIONS OF
THE DAY.**

1. As soon as awake in the morning, lift up your heart to God, saying: "O Lord, bestow on me Thy love; I wish to live always in Thee, and for Thee."

2. In dressing yourself, say: "Clothe my soul, O Lord, with the holiness of virtue!"

3. In changing your dress, say: "Be pleased, O Lord, to strip my soul of all its vices, and especially of those inclinations which are most displeasing to Thee."

4. When you first leave your chamber, or as soon as you are at liberty, kneel down, and say: "This is perhaps the last day of my life; the last that God will give me to cancel my sins, or to merit paradise! Ah, Lord, let me consecrate it all to Thy glory! By myself alone I can do nothing; but in Thee, and with Thee, I can do every thing! O Jesus, let me suffer all miseries, rather than stain my soul with sin!"

5. In going out of your house, say: "O my holy angel, guard my eyes, and all my senses, that I remain faithful to my Lord."

6. Before spiritual reading, say: "I come, O sweet Jesus, to consult Thy Divine will, in order to execute it faithfully!"

7. In going to church, say: "Thou art about

to enter the house of God, where all ought to be purity and sanctity ; put far from thee, then, all thoughts of earth, while thou enterest into the kingdom of heaven !”

8. On sitting down to meat, say : “ O Father of Mercy, as Thou art pleased to furnish nourishment for my body, nourish my soul also with Thy Divine grace !”

9. In going to bed, say : “ On this bed I may repose my body, but when will that happy moment be when my soul may repose in the Lord !”

10. Before beginning your prayers, say : “ Remember, O my soul, that thou art about to address the King of kings and Lord of lords ; let thy attention be proportionate to His immensity.”

11. On committing any fault, say immediately : “ O Lord, I have done that which is the attribute of my nature in sinning : do Thou, I beseech Thee, that which is the attribute of Thine in granting my pardon ! I thank Thee that my fault has not even been worse ; since my corrupt nature might have exposed me to even a greater fall !” After this prayer, dismiss the thought of your fault.

You may use other aspirations in accordance with other actions ; but let these aspirations always be full of confidence and love, by which means alone you can begin, advance in, and attain, true sanctity. It was a very useful practice of the Saints to employ the petitions of the Pater noster as ejaculations, taking either one or other, according to their wants. Many others they drew from the Gospel, as they were used by

those who came to implore our Divine Saviour to release them from some particular temporal infirmity, which may be held as the type of our spiritual infirmity, as thus in the

PRAYER OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN.

“ Lord, give me of this water, that I may not thirst, nor come hither to draw !”

OF THE LEPER.

‘ Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean !”

OF THE CENTURION.

“ Lord, I am not worthy Thou shouldst enter under my roof ; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed !”

OF THE CANAANITE WOMAN.

“ O Jesus, Thou son of David, have mercy on me ! My soul is vexed by the devil : O Lord, help me !”

OF MARTHA AND MARY.

“ Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick !”

OF THE BLIND MAN.

“ O Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me, that I may see !”

OF JAIRUS, THE RULER OF THE SYNAGOGUE.

“ Lord, my soul is in peril : lay Thy hand upon it, that it may live !”

OF THE PUBLICAN.

“ O God, be merciful to me a sinner !”

OF THE PRODIGAL SON.

“ Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in Thy sight, and am not worthy to be called Thy son !”

OF THE DISCIPLES.

“ Lord, teach us to pray !”

OF THE APOSTLES IN THE TEMPEST.

“ Lord, save us, or we perish !”

OF THE APOSTLES.

“ Lord, increase our faith !”

OF SAINT PETER.

“ Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee ! Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee ! Lord, Thou knowest all things ; Thou knowest that I love Thee !”

OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

“ My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour !”

OF CHRIST IN THE GARDEN.

“ O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. O My Father, if this cup may not pass away, but I must drink it, Thy will be done !”

OF CHRIST ON THE CROSS.

“ Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do !”

“ Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit !”

OF DAVID.

“ O God, come to my aid ; O Lord, make haste to help me !”

OF ST. AUGUSTIN.

“ Lord, let me do what Thou commandest, and command what Thou pleasest !”

“ My God, teach me to despise myself !”

OF ST. PHILIP NERI TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

“ O most holy Virgin Mary, Mother of God, implore Jesus, thy Son, in behalf of me, a wretched sinner !”

THE END.

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